

# Journeying in the Land- Where Jesus Lived.



*G. B. F. HALLOCK*

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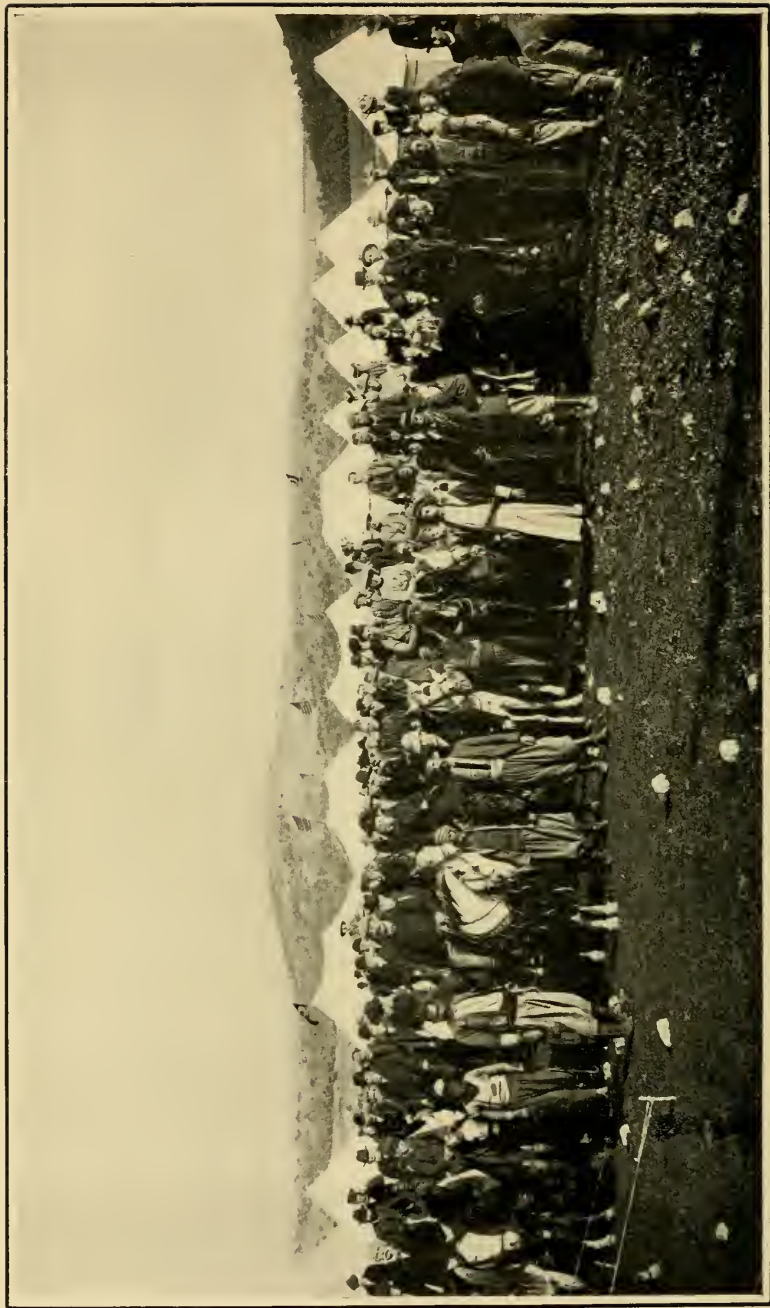
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OUR "GALILEE AND SAMARIA PARTY" IN CAMP AT TURMUS AIYA, NEAR SHILOH.

JOURNEYING  
I N T H E  
LAND WHERE  
JESUS LIVED

BY  
GERARD B. F. HALLOCK, D.D.

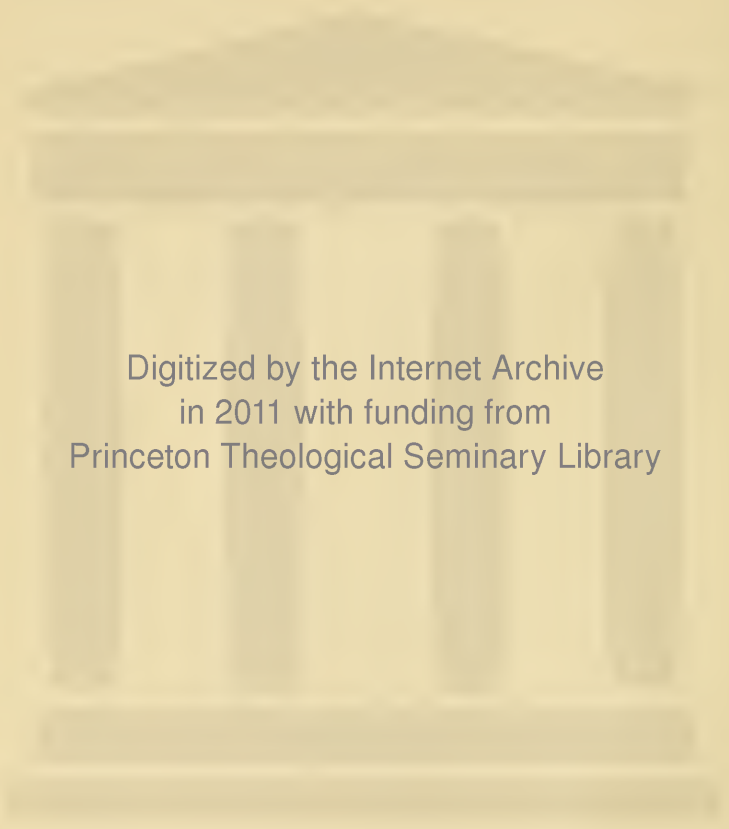


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## CONTENTS.

CHAPTER.	PAGE.
1. FIRST GLIMPSES OF THE HOLY LAND.....	2
2. FROM HAIFA TO NAZARETH.....	19
3. NAZARETH, THE CHILDHOOD HOME OF JESUS.....	29
4. FROM NAZARETH TO CANA AND THE LAKE OF GALILEE..	37
5. TIBERIAS AND A SAIL TO THE SITES ON LAKE GALILEE..	44
6. OUR FACES TOWARD JERUSALEM.....	64
7. JEZREEL, JENIN AND DOTHAN.....	80
8. SANUR AND SAMARIA.....	88
9. SHECHEM AND THE SAMARITANS.....	96
10. SYCHAR AND JACOB'S WELL.....	108
11. JOSEPH'S TOMB AND SOUTHWARD TO SHILOH.....	116
12. FROM SHILOH TO BETHEL.....	125
13. FROM BETHEL TO JERUSALEM.....	134
14. JERUSALEM, THE HOLY CITY.....	141
15. JERUSALEM, THE HOLY CITY (CONTINUED).....	149
16. TO BETHANY AND THE GOOD SAMARITAN INN.....	160
17. THE BROOK CHERITH AND JERICHO.....	168
18. TO GILGAL AND THE DEAD SEA.....	176
19. THE JORDAN AND THE PILGRIMS' BATHING-PLACE....	185
20. JOURNEYING TOWARD BETHLEHEM.....	194
21. BETHLEHEM, WHERE JESUS WAS BORN.....	202
22. THE POOLS OF SOLOMON AND THE ROAD TO HEBRON....	216
23. HEBRON AND ABRAHAM'S OAK.....	227
24. FROM JERUSALEM TO RAMLEH.....	237
25. THE PLAINS OF SHARON, LYDDA AND JOPPA.....	246
26. SOME SACRED LOCALITIES OUTSIDE OF PALESTINE.....	255
SUPPLEMENTAL NOTES.....	273
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	292



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## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

FRONTISPIECE—"OUR GALILEE AND SAMARIA PARTY" IN CAMP  
AT TURMUS AIYA, NEAR SHILOH

	OPPOSITE PAGE
HAIFA, NEAR THE FOOT OF MT. CARMEL.....	16
OUR DRAGOMAN.....	24
OUR CAMP AT NAZARETH.....	24
NAZARETH .....	32
THE FOUNTAIN OF THE VIRGIN, NAZARETH.....	38
THE LAKE OF GALILEE.....	44
TIBERIAS .....	56
RESTING NEAR THE HORNS OF HATTIN.....	70
WOMEN AND CHILDREN AROUND THE SPRING AT CANA.....	70
THE PLAIN OF ESDRAELON FROM JENIN.....	80
THE TOWER OF JEZREEL.....	80
THE CHURCH OF ST. JOHN IN SAMARIA, NOW A MOSQUE..	92
RUINS OF HEROD'S TEMPLE, SAMARIA.....	92
A SAMARITAN PRIEST.....	104
THE CURB OF JACOB'S WELL.....	114
"WOMEN GRINDING AT THE MILL".....	124
GENERAL VIEW OF JERUSALEM.....	134
THE ENTRANCE TO JERUSALEM BY JAFFA GATE.....	140
DAVID STREET, JERUSALEM.....	146
GREEK CHAPEL IN THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE, JERUSALEM .....	152
INTERIOR OF THE MOSQUE OF OMAR, JERUSALEM.....	158
THE TOMB OF LAZARUS, BETHANY.....	164
THE GOOD SAMARITAN INN ON THE ROAD TO JERICHO.....	170
THE DEAD SEA.....	180

6      *THE LAND WHERE JESUS LIVED*

SHEPHERDS FORDING THE JORDAN.....	190
PILGRIMS ENTERING BETHLEHEM.....	200
THE GROTTO OF THE NATIVITY.....	210
THE POOLS OF SOLOMON.....	220
TANNING GOAT-SKINS BOTTLES, HEBRON.....	228
ABRAHAM'S OAK, NEAR HEBRON.....	234
THE TOWER OF RAMLEH.....	240
THE PLAIN OF SHARON.....	246
LANDING PLACE, JAFFA.....	254
NATIVES EATING DINNER.....	264
SHEEP AND SHEPHERDS.....	278



## A FOREWORD.

These notes of happy and exceedingly profitable days of travel in the Land Where Jesus Lived are hereby dedicated to those who have made the journey and wish to remember it,—especially to the eight hundred and twenty members of the “Celtic” Cruise of 1902 in remembrance of pleasant journeyings together,—to those who hope to make the journey and wish to prepare for it, and to those who cannot make the journey and wish to read about it.

We have had in mind in the preparation of the volume also that vast host of noble workers in the Sunday-school, as teachers and officers, and scholars too, whose representatives are to meet in the World’s Sunday School Convention at Jerusalem in April, 1904, and who whether going, or tarrying at home, might find such a book interesting to read or helpful in their work.

G. B. F. H.



## CHAPTER I.

### FIRST GLIMPSES OF THE HOLY LAND.

**F**EW INDEED are there who do not feel an intense desire to visit Palestine—to view its sacred scenes and tread

“Those Holy Fields  
Over whose acres walked those blessed feet  
Which, [nineteen] hundred years ago, were nailed  
For our advantage, on the bitter Cross.”

These words of Shakespeare—household words they are—well define the feeling which moves within so many hearts and throughout so many lands. It need scarcely be said, then, that it was in happy fulfilment of the dream of a lifetime when, a few short months since, we found ourselves, and in the fortunate companionship of so many others like-minded, on the way for a visit to the Holy Land.

It may be of interest to state that in the whole company there were over eight hundred and thirty. It ought also to be recorded, as a testimony to God's gracious and providential care, that in this great number there occurred not one death, not one case of serious illness, and no accident that resulted in the

least physical harm. And as for our ship, we scarcely knew that we were on the sea, so steady and strong she sailed.

As we have already intimated, it was with no idle curiosity or desire to gratify a taste for mere "sight-seeing" that we set out to make a journey through the land where Jesus lived. And, writing now at this distance and after the lapse of weeks, and through no hasty impulse of enthusiasm, we wish to testify that the visit exceeded our expectations, proving not only full of interest and instruction, but opening up the pages of the Bible as nothing else could do. To actually look upon and walk about the localities where God's Israel toiled, and journeyed, and fought battles, and built altars, and offered sacrifices—where patriarchs sat in their tent doors—where angels came down as messengers from heaven—where the Saviour himself walked and talked and performed his mighty works—where the ear has heard the songs of the same birds, the murmur of the same streamlets, and the eye has beheld the same flowers and looked upon the same mountains and hills and valleys and fruitage—where the feet have trod in the footsteps of Christ, as he went from Jerusalem to Olivet, from Olivet to Bethany, and from Bethany to Galilee—to have rested at noon-tide upon the same well—to have wandered along the margin of the lake upon whose sunlit bosom he preached

to such vast multitudes—to have ascended the mountains where he uttered his “beatitudes” and fed the hungry thousands—these things have inspired the mind and thrilled the soul with experiences that can never be forgotten, and, we trust, that can never lose their influence. It would seem, indeed, as some one has said, that “next to going to heaven a visit to the land where heaven was revealed to man and where redemption for the race was wrought out might prove in fact the most valuable and inspiring human experiences.”

We entered Palestine not by the usual way, but by what is denominated “the back door.” That is, we did not go first to Joppa and thence to Jerusalem, but first to Haifa, further north, then to Nazareth and Galilee, and overland to Jerusalem; though some of our party went in to Galilee and back to Haifa again and from there to Joppa and Jerusalem; and a still larger number went only to Joppa and Jerusalem and that general vicinity.

Considering its immense influence in the history of the world, the first thing that strikes the mind of student or visitor is the surprising smallness of the land. Though in former times the land in Israel’s possession was larger, yet in the time of our Saviour it included—and the same is meant to-day when we speak of Palestine—only the territory between the Mediterranean Sea and the mountains east of the

Jordan, and between the Lebanon mountains on the north and the desert on the south. In other words, its length is from Dan to Beer-sheba, or about 170 miles, and its breadth from the Mediterranean to a little east of the Jordan, an average of about thirty-five miles. It forms a territory about the size of the State of Vermont, or of Maryland, or about one-fifth the size of the State of New York. This is the land where Jesus lived; and in all his journeyings he never travelled over as much as one-half this small territory. Every traveler in Palestine, no matter how well informed he may be in sacred geography, is surprised at the smallness of the territory.

Yet it is the greatest land on earth—the land of the Bible—the land where Jesus lived—the land that has influenced the world as no other land has ever done or ever will do; and we doubt not that it is for this very reason it seems so impossible for one whose eyes have not seen it and whose feet have not walked over it, to conceive how small is the space which it covers. When one is journeying over it for the first time, he never ceases to be surprised at finding the holy places so near to one another.

From many a mountain-top it can almost all be seen in the sweep of one look. Moses, who was not allowed to enter it, saw from the top of a lofty mountain on the east side of the Jordan all the land of Canaan spread out before him like a great map

on a table. His view was from the southeast. But the same thing is possible from other positions. From a hill that rises only five hundred feet above Nazareth, toward the north of Palestine, and only sixteen hundred feet above the level of the sea, we plainly saw snow-capped Hermon in the north, and the mountains round about Jerusalem in the south, while our ship lying at anchor in the harbor at Haifa was plainly visible in the waters of the Mediterranean on the west, as were also the basin of Lake Galilee and the mountains of Moab and Gilead beyond Jordan on the east.

But this land, small as it is, is wonderfully diversified with seas and plains, mountains and valleys, hills and dales, lakes and rivers, and running rills, and it has every variety of climate and soil, and yields almost all kinds of fruits and flowers, and of vegetable and agricultural products.

The reason for this will become plain when we consider the topography of the land. The land is made up, in a general way, of two ridges of mountains and two bands of depression. The first range of mountains lies between the Mediterranean and the Jordan, and runs north and south. The second range is parallel but east of the Jordan. This makes a wide band of foot-hills and plain along the coast region, toward the Mediterranean, a high ridge of table-lands and mountains between that and the

Jordan, then the Jordan valley, and still beyond the Mountains of Gilead and Moab, to the east. These features in themselves would give a great variety of climate and product, but add to them the fact that from taking its rise in the snow-capped Hermon the Jordan flows down until at the lake of Galilee it is over six hundred feet below the level of the sea, and at the Dead Sea is in a hot, low tropical depression thirteen hundred feet below the level of the sea. There is nothing like this in any other part of the world. It is not the smallness of the country that is the wonder now. The wonder is the *universality* which the creative hand of God has packed into this smallness. As some one has said, "Palestine is the world in a nutshell."

A noted scientist, who has spent the most of his life in the study of the natural features of the land, says, "There is not another spot on earth where so much of nature is focused as in this little corner. You have Alpine cold and torrid heat. Here are the animals, birds, insects, plants, shells, rocks, of all zones."

This is why the illustrations drawn from nature with which the Bible abounds are suited to all climes and are understood by all men. "The Bible is the world-book made in a world-land. As the Jew is the miracle of history, even so the cosmopolitan land of the Jew is the miracle of geography. The land



and the people and the Book constitute a trinity of truth, and the testimony of the one is strengthened by the testimony of the others." Such as these are among the reasons why a visit to the land is of such inestimable value.

Palestine! Here we are at anchor in the Bay of Acre, Mount Carmel towering above us from out the sea and the little city of Haifa, at its base, asleep beside the tranquil waters of its beautiful harbor. It is very early morning; but soon all our passengers are awake and about, many declaring that the one view from the deck of our vessel is worth the entire cost of our trip across the sea. For not only is the view itself a charming one, but the land over which we are looking is the Holy Land, Palestine, the land of Israel and of the prophets and of the apostles and where angels have often talked with men. Yes, it is the land where Jesus lived, where he walked and talked and taught and wrought his miracles and died that we might live!

In the Bible, on account of its sacred associations, the land is given various titles. It is called the Holy Land, Zech. 2:12, the pleasant land, Dan. 8:9, the glorious land, Dan. 11:16, the Lord's land, Hos. 9:3, the land which the Lord swore to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob, Gen. 50:24, and the land of promise, Heb. 11:9. From its inhabitants at different periods it is called the land of Canaan, Gen.

11 : 31, the land of the Hebrews, Gen. 40 : 15, the land of Israel, 1 Sam. 13 : 19, and Palestine, which is now familiarly applied to the whole country, though when used in the Old Testament it had the original and narrower sense of Philistia.

Haifa is soon awake, as well as the people on our ship. The copper-colored natives are filling into boats and coming out to meet us and row us to the shore. While they are coming let us note what we can. We are facing the east. Yonder, on the left, are the hills of Lebanon, running back to the towering mountains whence King Solomon obtained cedar trees, fir-trees and algum trees for the temple in Jerusalem, 2 Chron. 2 : 8-18. To our right is Mount Carmel, jutting out into the sea and sloping upward and eastward toward the mountains of Samaria. Just in front is the Plain of Acre and the mouth of the river Kishon, on the banks of which we see the waving palm-trees and green gardens. In the distance, at the northern end of the sickle-shaped bay, seemingly rising right out of the sea, is the city of Acre, called Accho in Judges 1 : 31, one of the oldest and historically most interesting cities in the world, whose early inhabitants, the Phœnicians, are given the credit of having invented the alphabet, discovered how to make dyes, and of having been the first to manufacture glass. It is possible that some of the tear-bottles members of our party bought on shore



HAIFA, NEAR THE FOOT OF MT. CARMEL.



were specimens of their ancient work. In apostolic times there were Christians here, and Paul once visited them, Acts 21 : 7. Perhaps no city of the same size in the wide world has had so strange and chequered a history. Richard I., of England, and Philip, of France, purchased its conquest once at the sacrifice of 100,000 troops. They gave it to the Knights of St. John, of Jerusalem, who named it St. Jean D' Acre. But they could not hold it. Napoleon Bonaparte once besieged it for sixty-one days. He failed, and afterwards said : "My failure to take it changed the destiny of the world." At last, in 1840, the united fleets of England, Austria and Turkey, sailed into its beautiful harbor and, after a bombardment of three hours, left it utterly demolished. From this downfall it is but very slowly recovering. As we look again shoreward, far in the distance to the northeast, we see, plainly in sight, snow-capped and ever majestic Mt. Hermon, while nearer, yet in the same general direction, are the hills that lie round about the vicinity of Nazareth.

Now on shore, we pass through the swaying, noisy crowd of eager inhabitants, all bent upon selling something, from an orange to a valuable historical relic; by a provision of our agent we pass the custom house officers with a nod, without having to open our baggage; we are seized by our dragomen and soon are in carriages, sight-seeing in the city,

or else out on our way to Nazareth. The city contains about 12,000 inhabitants, manufactures soap, olive-oil and wine, which with wheat, maize, sesame and wool are largely exported. It has two Mohammedan mosques, several Christian churches, schools, a hospital and a thriving German colony, known as the Templars. A little distance up on Mt. Carmel is a sanitarium, a hotel, and, further up, the famous Carmelite Monastery.

## CHAPTER II.

### FROM HAIFA TO NAZARETH.

**A**S WE HAVE said, our first sight of the Holy Land was from near the harbor of Haifa, in the Bay of Acre, just north of the promontory of Carmel. The great central ridge of mountains is cut in twain here by the plain of Esdraelon and the valley of Jezreel, and the mountains of Carmel, running southeast and northwest, are an exception to the general description of the land given in our opening chapter.

Though we had known it was there, the first surprise that greeted our eyes on landing at Haifa was the sight of a railway track. This railroad is intended to go from Haifa to the Jordan and the Lake of Galilee and from thence to the ancient city of Damascus. The track is laid about five miles, but the road is graded and the bridges built as far as we went toward the Jordan. We must say that it looked strangely out of place in Palestine, and yet we may well hope that it will soon be completed. Any one who has gone over the so-called roads of Palestine, as they now are, will see the reason for this wish.

We were all prepared to appreciate the frontier farmer's description of a road in his country, which was, he said, first a wagon track, then a bridle path, then a squirrel-track, and then ran up a tree! One thing is certain, that the roads are quite generally notable for their absence.

There is a so-called road from Haifa to Nazareth. We were placed in heavy stages, four persons to each, with two horses in front, and an extra one at the side, hitched by a strange contrivance to the body of the carryall. All we can say is that it was an actual relief when at Nazareth the road came down to a bridle-path and we abandoned the stages finally and took to horseback for the balance of the journey.

The distance from Haifa to Nazareth is twenty-three and one-half miles. It was the sixth of March, and as the latter rains were over the ground the whole distance was fairly enamelled with beautiful flowers of brightest hue. In the low lands above Haifa palm trees were growing in abundance and the gardens were green with semi-tropical vegetation. Here and there all along our path were sturdy live-oaks or orchards of fig and olive trees. At half a mile from Haifa was passed a little Jewish colony—recently established—for bear in mind this strange fact, that there are but few Jews in all Palestine, except those who have gone there in comparatively recent years from other countries, the population



being largely native Syrians, Arabs, a few Turks and quite a few Europeans.

At one mile from Haifa we left the gardens and entered the plain of Kishon, going along near the river or brook Kishon. After passing a number of small villages and ruins we came in sight of that portion of Mount Carmel near which Elijah's slaughter of the prophets of Baal is said to have taken place.

Just here we may well give a brief description of Mount Carmel itself. The mountain of Carmel is, as is well known, a lengthened promontory or ridge stretching from the mountains of Samaria in a long line to the northwest toward the sea, and is frequently mentioned in the Bible period. It is of limestone formation and is especially rich in vegetation, due to its proximity to the sea and the heavy dews that fall upon it. Its highest point is 1,810 feet, opposite Harosheth where our road branched off toward Nazareth. Back toward the sea the mountain slopes down to a height of about six hundred feet, and on a shelving promontory at 480 feet elevation is the famous Carmelite Monastery, from which the Carmelite order of monks received its name. The aboriginal inhabitants regarded this mountain as sacred, and at a very early period in Jewish history it was denominated "The Mount of God." Its beauty is often extolled in the Bible, as when

Isaiah prophesies of the Church, "The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon;" or, as in Solomon's Song, magnifying the Church's graces, "Thine head upon thee is like Carmel." It does not seem to have been thickly populated in ancient times, as it certainly is not now, but it was frequently sought as an asylum by the persecuted, on account of its many natural grottoes in the soft limestone rock, in some of which are still seen inscriptions placed there by hermits and religious refugees. In the twelfth century the hermits here began to be regarded as a distinct order, and in 1224 they were set apart as such by the Pope at Rome. There are now some eighteen or twenty monks there living in a large, clean and airy building, and they make a business of entertaining pilgrims on an extensive scale.

It was across the valley opposite the highest point of Carmel, of which we have written, and near the village of Harosheth, in the shade of a grove of fine live-oaks, that we had our first lunch and rested for an hour after, on the day we began our journey. The flower-bedecked ground was our table and the water we drank was from a very doubtful spring near by. The village, which was in sight, and from which the children and beggars and venders of fruit came down, is spoken of in the Bible as early as in the Book of Judges, where it is mentioned as belong-

ing to the Gentiles, and as the residence of Sisera, the captain of the host of Jabin, King of Canaan, that reigned in Hazor.

From here on the road became more rough and steep, up and down hill, over great stones and boulders. We crossed the famous threshing floor and further on saw one or two portions of what was once a splendid Roman road, and, within four miles of Nazareth, stopped a few moments at the rather pretty little village of Yafa, or the Japhia which is mentioned in the nineteenth chapter of Joshua. There is an ancient tradition that this village was the home of Zebedee and of his sons, who became the apostles James and John. We were told that Josephus once fortified this place. There is in the village a Protestant school, two Latin churches, and a Greek church and school.

Though most people would probably choose if they might, on their entrance into the Holy Land, to see Jerusalem first, we somehow felt that we were almost fortunate in the fact that the first considerable city we saw was Nazareth—the home of our Saviour, and where he spent nearly the whole of his human sojourn upon the earth.

We had no chance to anticipate the place by previous glimpses from a distance, for it nestles in a basin in the midst of an amphitheatre of hills that rise on all sides nearly five hundred feet above it.

We were approaching from the west, and after ascending a little slope of the mountain, the town suddenly burst upon us, the whole city at once, with its dazzling white walls and embowered in fig orchards, pomegranate groves and beautiful gardens.

Our caravan descended quickly down a good road into the town, and our coming, as can easily be imagined, caused no little excitement. Children ran out the way to meet their fathers and women came to greet their husbands. The dogs barked and the hostlers hurried this way and that with the horses. The scene was one of rapid movement and of an impressiveness not soon to be forgotten. Part of the passengers were taken to the convent, part to the hotel, but on the level threshing floor, at the lower edge of the village, stood over fifty beautiful white tents glistening in the evening sun, and to these one hundred and fifty of our party were taken. The tents were large and comfortable, lined inside with red and white material in fantastic Oriental figures, each having three comfortable cots, a large square rug, small table, candles and other conveniences. Suitable guards kept watch about the camp all night, to keep away dogs and thieves and hyenas. At six o'clock a seven course dinner was served and by nine we were all abed with the assurance of being wakened at five in the morning, in order to get an early start for Galilee before the hot sun should be up.



OUR HEAD DRAGOMAN.



OUR CAMP AT NAZARETH.



It can hardly be said that we slept, for the dogs barked and the jackals screeched, the guards talked and whistled, the horses neighed, and ever and anon the mellifluous cadences of the braying of numbers of donkeys were heard. The reader will not be surprised to be told that the silence was not very impressive, when it is stated that in our waiting cavalcade, for use on the morrow, were three hundred and eighty horses, pack mules and donkeys—nearly two hundred riding horses for our party and the dragomen,—besides pack animals to carry all the tents, their furnishings, our food and food for the beasts, tables, tableware, camp chairs, cooking utensils and other belongings. About the time we thought we had gotten to sleep we were awakened by an indescribable din. It was of an Oriental band marching around our tents. It sounded like the beating of kettles and drums and pans with an occasional tin horn for variety. Our dragomen said it was the hosts of Israel marching around Jericho and pretty soon the walls of our tents would fall down—which saying proved true, for before some of us had completed our toilet the tent ropes began to loosen, the tent walls to fall, and by the time we were seated at breakfast they were all down and being safely loaded on the backs of the pack animals.

Before closing this chapter we wish to emphasize again the importance to every Bible student of mak-



ing a study of the land as well as of the Book, or of the land in connection with the Book. This we can do whether we go to Palestine or not. But there certainly is mighty confirmation to one's faith in being able to see the land itself. Ofttimes the land brings into light many shades in the meaning and many beauties in the expressions of the inspired records which had not before been perceived. Sometimes an unexpected point in the topography of a place, or a feature in the manners of the people, not before known, or some Gospel allusion so presents itself to view that new light is flashed upon whole sections of God's Word. The land illuminates the Book. The land confirms the Book. The land adds new interest to the Book. "The land shows that the writers of the Book were simple, artless and faithful chroniclers of events that are so strikingly in accord with the places mentioned and the customs referred to that they bear on their very face the unquestionable stamp of veracity and historic truth. In the written Gospels features of the common, daily life of the people are constantly alluded to, many of which remain unchanged in the land to this very day. The land still shows that the words which the Book puts into the mouths of various people, the homely details of domestic and social life, the references to agricultural and pastoral pursuits, the passing allusions to the peculiar customs of the people, are all in



accord with the modes of thought, forms of belief and habits of living which remain practically unchanged up to the present moment." The Book was most evidently written by those who knew the geography and topography of the land, and the peculiarities of the people who lived in it. As you journey along reading the Book and surveying the land you find the mountains and the lakes, the rivers and the rills, the hills and the valleys, the towns and the villages all in their places, relatively located, and running in the courses, just as described in the casual allusions of the Book. In other words, the Book fits into the land just as a picture fits into its frame, and the land is a frame into which no other picture can be made to fit.

The fact is that God's revelation was made in connection with and through the history of a particular people, namely, the children of Israel. The history of that people and God's revelation are therefore closely intertwined. As a recent visitor to Palestine has well said, "A divine revelation implies a history, and a history in turn implies a locality. Yonder is the locality, and we possess it. It is Palestine. We go to that locality and study it and interrogate it and by it prove the history, and by the history prove the revelation. If the locality, as pictured in the Book, be false everything else is false. If the locality, as pictured in the Book be true, everything else is true."

The internal argument for the Book is sufficient, and we could and should accept it on that. It is indeed complete and satisfying. But God has graciously given us many external proofs as well; and the land is one of them. The land corresponds with the Book. The land illuminates the Book. The land illustrates the Book. The land confirms the Book. And right here, we believe is the real secret of the fascination of the land, the enthusiasm for the land which has existed and will continue to exist. "The Holy Land will never lose its attraction for men, and chiefly because it is the land of the Holy Book—one of its best evidences, one of its best expounders, and one of the best incentives to its study."

## CHAPTER III.

### NAZARETH, THE CHILDHOOD HOME OF JESUS.

THE HOLY LAND has a wonderful fascination. We love to think about it. We love to hear about it. We love to talk about it. And, despite many hardships, thousands of people every year go to see it, and visit its sacred localities. It has power to charm and hold spellbound the hearts of men as has no other region of earth.

And this feeling is not something new in the world. From the very beginning a sacred halo has encircled it, and, if prophecy be true, will continue to encircle it to the end of time. Think of the spell which it cast over men like Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob. As some one has said, "They could not leave it for the shortest period without being seized with a Palestine hunger which immediately brought them back. Joseph might have had an Egyptian pyramid for his grave but he choose the humble cave of Machpelah in preference. There is no romance in all the annals of patriotism equal to the unburied body of Joseph waiting centuries and in faith, for a coming grave in the Land of Promise. To Moses

the land had such attractions that he gave up the palace and the throne of Pharaoh for it. And when the Hebrews were exiles in Babylon such was their Canaan-hunger that it drove the very music out of their harps." They wept when they remembered Zion, and urged how impossible it was for them to sing the Lord's song in a strange land. Was it not this same almost irresistible fascination, manifesting itself, to be sure, in a possibly not very sane or sensible manner, which inspired the Crusaders of the middle ages, and poured out the best blood of Europe in a great sacrifice on Palestinian soil?

Now, this fascinating power of the land is a fact. There is no denying it. But as a fact it certainly demands a reasonable explanation. Fortunately that explanation is perfectly at hand. Abraham and his seed loved the land because of the promise that the Messiah, the Redeemer of the world, should be born in it, and live in it. The New Testament saints and their seed loved the land because the promise was fulfilled, and Christ their Saviour, as ours, was born in it, and lived in it. And as their spiritual descendants, and for the very same reason, we love it too. It is the land in which Jesus was born, which held his cradle, his cross and his tomb, in the which he manifested his perfect and helpful life, and where he spake those pure and uplifting, life-giving words which we find to-day in the gospels of his grace.

It is indeed a Holy Land, and a holy and sacred privilege it is if we may see it, or so study about or learn of it that it shall become a real, intellectually visible, well known land to us.

The hope of contributing even a little toward such a desirable result is, we trust, the only reason for this another volume on Palestine. At the same time it is the excuse we wish to offer for going into what would otherwise seem to be quite small and even trivial details, such as are usually overlooked or intentionally omitted by those who write on the general theme of the Holy Land. Our one wish is to have our readers SEE the land, to be sure, through the eyes of another, but nevertheless really to see it. And this requires that it shall be described not in bold outlines and in the features that are commonly emphasized, but that the background shall be filled in, and that the smaller and less important features shall be inserted, in order that a truly life-like and realistic view shall be given.

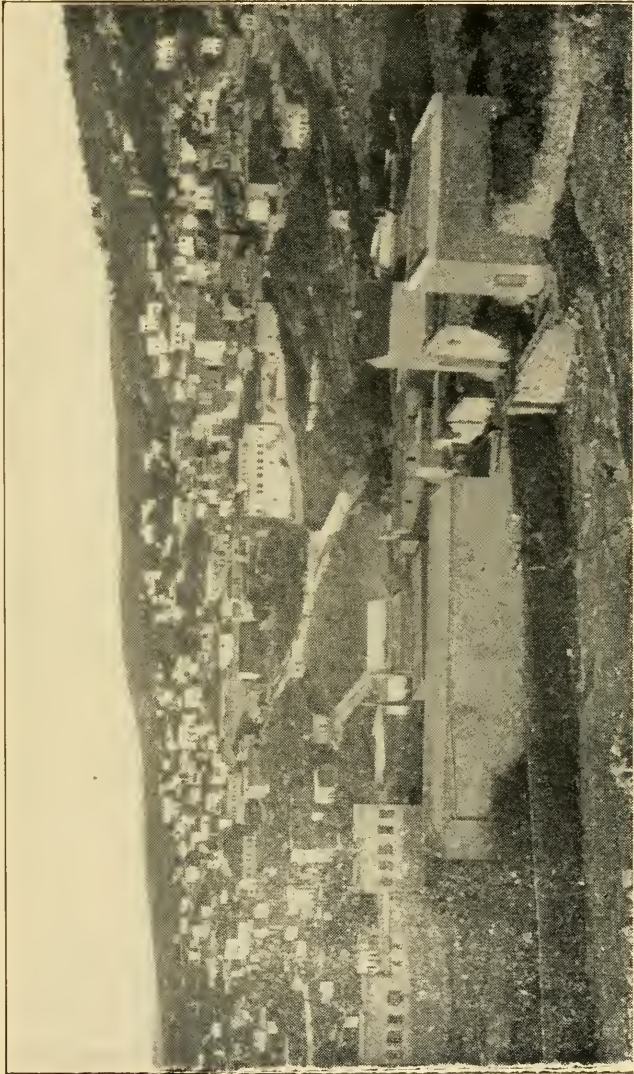
Our journey thus far brought us to Nazareth, the childhood home of Jesus, showing our party in camp on the threshing floor just below and on the edge of the village, but gave no description of the little city itself or of its general surroundings.

The place is located between the Mediterranean and the Sea of Galilee, about twenty-one miles in a straight line from the one and seventeen miles from

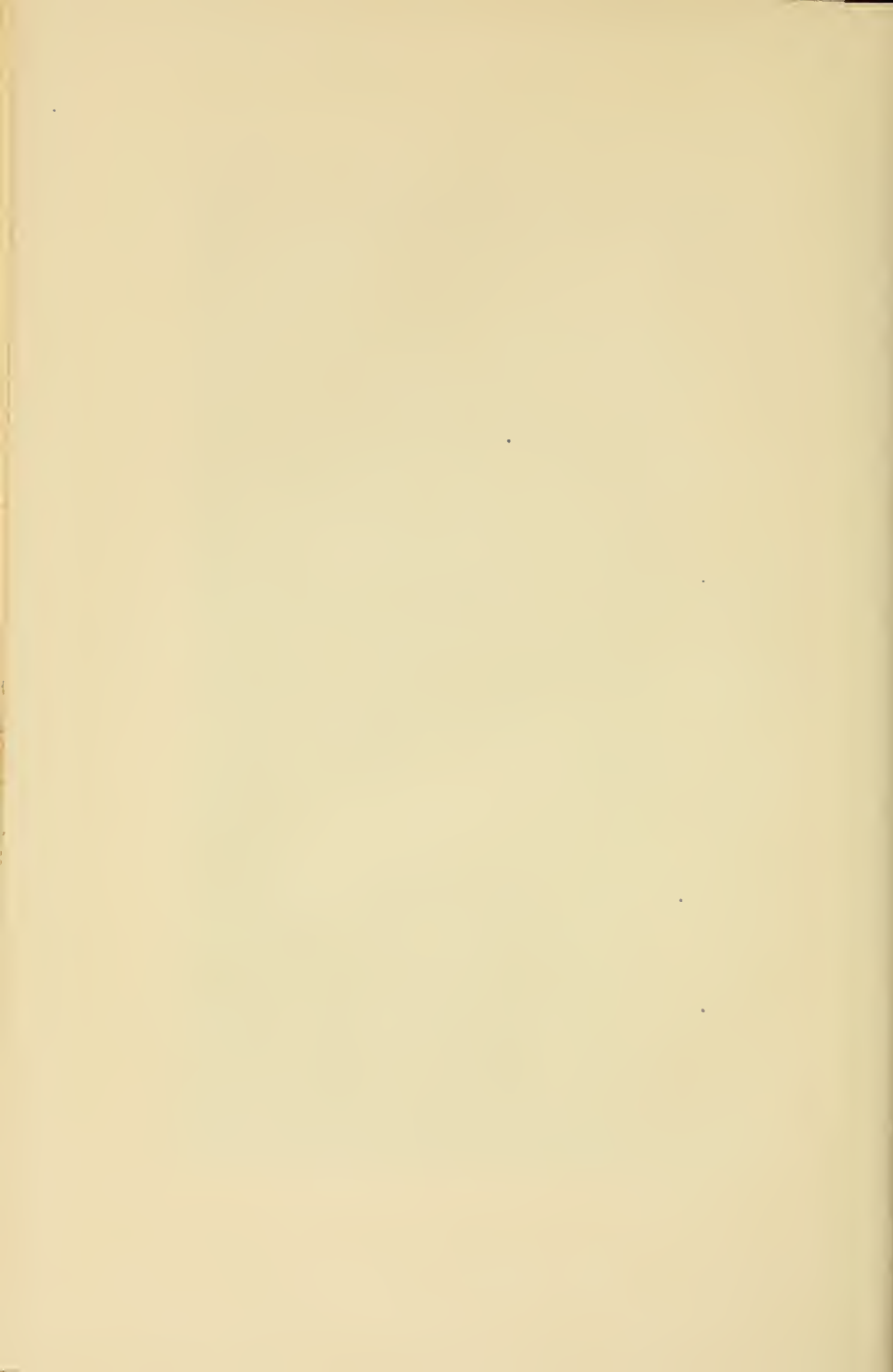
the other, and sixty-five miles north of Jerusalem. It is a town of about seven thousand five hundred people, two-thirds of whom are Greek and Latin Christians, a few are Protestants, and the remainder are Mohammedans. There are very few, if any, Jews. It is about eleven hundred feet above the level of the sea, and the fifteen crumpled hills which "rise around it like the edge of a shell to guard it from intrusion" are from four hundred to five hundred feet higher. While it is true that none of the great roads of ancient times led up to this sunny nook, and it was in this sense secluded, it lay nevertheless very close to the central route of travel which communicated with the outside world. Too much has been assumed, we believe, regarding the obscurity of the town, and as for Nathaniel's expression, "Can there be any good thing come out of Nazareth?" and whose own home was near by, we do not believe that it carries with it any evidence whatsoever that Nazareth was previously held in contempt, or was especially wicked, but only that Nathaniel was not aware of any prophecies that would encourage the belief that the Messiah was to come from that city.

The town, as the modern traveler sees it, lies on the western side of the hill-encircled basin and extends for some distance up its slopes. The streets rise in terraces and the flat-roofed houses, built of the yellowish-white limestone of the region, shine





NAZARETH.





in the sun with a dazzling brightness, from among the gardens of fig trees, olives, cypresses, and the white and scarlet blossoms of the orange and pomegranate. It is to-day, as it has been in the past, a quiet rural town, the abode of shepherds, craftsmen, vine-dressers and tillers of the soil. The land, which seems to be very fertile, is divided off into little fields or gardens by hedges of prickly pear or cactus.

Of course, while there we went around to see the traditional sights that priestcraft has invented and that superstition venerates. They are the so-called "holy places," shown by the representatives of the Greek and Latin churches. They are mostly comparatively modern creations. But before we condemn them utterly let us not forget that they are substitutes for realities,—realities that once existed in this very location. The one thing, however, which makes Nazareth and all its surroundings a holy place is the Life once manifested here, the blessed memory of which and the influence of which can never pass away.

The first place we visited was the Church of the Annunciation which lies within the high enclosing walls of a celebrated Latin convent. The church contains an organ and several fairly good paintings, one being an Annunciation and another a Mater Dolorosa, attributed to Terralio, a somewhat well

known Spanish painter. Staircases of a dozen steps on either side ascend to the high altar, which is dedicated to the Angel Gabriel. Between these, fifteen broad stone steps descend directly to the chapel of the Annunciation, in the crypt, which has a marble altar inscribed with the words, in Latin, "Here the Word was made flesh." Immediately to the left of the entrance are two columns, one of which is said to mark the exact spot where the angel stood when he made the announcement to the virgin Mary of her coming honor and the other,—a fragment of a column depending from the ceiling and reputed to be miraculously supported—marks the spot where it is claimed the Virgin received the angel's message. We were also shown the room in which, it is said, Joseph and Mary lived. This also contains an altar, and on it is inscribed in Latin, "Here he was subject to them." We were shown, too, the place where, it is said, the house of the Virgin stood, which in the thirteenth century the angels carried away to Loreto, in Italy, to keep it from being desecrated by the Moslems.

There were many other impossible sites and absurd and ridiculous relics shown us, all of which we wished the angels had carried away to Italy, or some other place. Among these was a large stone, on which the priest gravely informed us, Christ took his last meal with his disciples before his crucifixion,

and his first one after his resurrection. All such monkish traditions, legends and sites are offensive, but here in Nazareth they seemed especially so, and more particularly when we remembered that most of them had been invented not through ignorance, but in covetousness, for the sake of the fees which the pilgrims and the tourists pay for seeing them. It is a pity that the name of Jesus should be made a source of merchandise in the very home of his childhood.

But there were other places which we visited with less of this feeling. One was the so-called workshop of Joseph. We had no thought that it was the veritable carpenter shop in which Jesus worked with his reputed father; but as it is a very old workshop, and has in it a collection of the most ancient carpenter's tools, it conveys to us an idea, as near as one can now be formed, of what the workshop of Joseph must really have been.

Another is the synagogue in which Christ is said to have preached, and from which he was cast out. It is certainly a very ancient building. It is claimed that its history can easily be traced back to the fifth century, not a few saying that at least the side walls are a part of the original building. But even if it is not the veritable synagogue in which Jesus worshipped with his parents in the days of his youth, it is quite likely that it stands on the site of that one. At all events it must give us some fair idea of the

appearance of the place when Jesus opened to that remarkable passage in Isaiah, and in words that were full of grace and truth, and almost irresistible conviction, told his fellow townsmen that he himself was the Messiah of whom the prophet spake. But their attitude of astonishment and even admiration soon turned to jealousy and hate. And this suggests another site which was pointed out to us, namely, the so-called Mount of Precipitation where, when the revulsion of feeling among his neighbors came that day, they took him that they might "cast him down headlong."

Little credence is given to the traditional site, which is more than a mile from the city, but it is thought the true place is found back of the Maronite church, where there is a precipitous cliff, some thirty or forty feet in height, which suddenly terminates the slope of the hill on which "their city was built."

## CHAPTER IV.

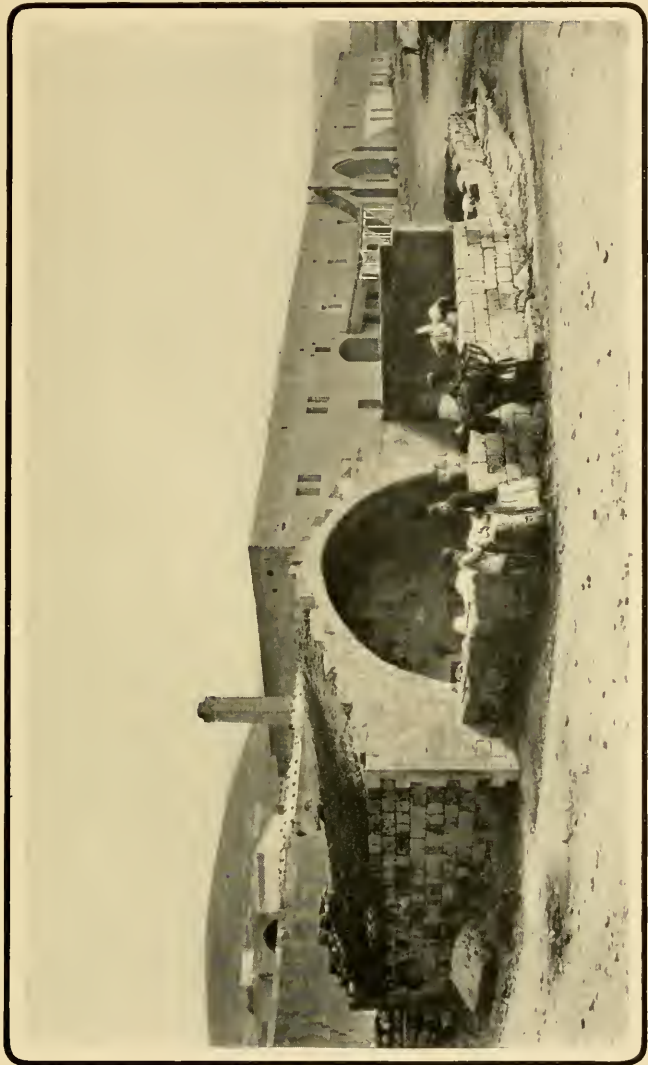
### FROM NAZARETH TO CANA AND THE LAKE OF GALILEE.

**I**N THE last chapter we were describing Nazareth, and had spoken of some of its so-called "holy places," the Church of the Annunciation, the Workshop of Joseph, the ancient synagogue, the traditional site of the Hill of Precipitation, etc. But the most interesting place in Nazareth is the Fountain of the Virgin, or, as it is called, "Mary's Well," which is a copious spring of pure, beautiful, sparkling water in the northeastern portion of the village. This is the public fountain of the place, and from time immemorial has been the one unfailing source of water supply to its inhabitants. This overflowing basin is the only thing in Nazareth, aside from the natural features of the vicinity, which can be directly associated with the home-life of Jesus. The city absolutely depends on it. If it should dry up, the place would disappear. It was doubtless here just the same and the city just as dependent upon it, two thousand years ago. So, when we follow the path that leads to it we are at the one place where we may

feel perfectly sure we are treading for the moment in the earthly footsteps of our Lord.

This fountain is also the center of the social life of the city. As all the city drinks from the same fountain, and as the women of all classes fetch the water for their household use, the whole city meets daily for news and gossip around this one spring which supports the life of every home. Groups of women and girls are always to be seen there, and children playing in the sparkling stream that flows away. And the men too are coming and going. So the sound of conversation here is almost as unbroken as the flow of the water, and every now and then there breaks over the hum of voices the ring of hearty laughter and of merry song.

The scene we witnessed at the Fountain of the Virgin has doubtless been repeating itself there day after day for centuries upon centuries, back to the time when the maiden Mary used to come with the other village maidens and chat with them while she filled her pitcher. For here, no doubt, she too, with her water-jar on her head, used to come with light and graceful step, as do the maidens of the present day. It is truly an Oriental and picturesque sight one looks upon here, and one sees many bright, intelligent faces. As we stood for some time watching the motley throng in their quaint garbs and graceful attitudes, as they came and went, filling their earthen



THE FOUNTAIN OF THE VIRGIN, NAZARETH.





jars and assisting each other in raising them to their heads, chattering unceasingly the meanwhile, perhaps retailing the precious bits of gossip of the town—for bear in mind they have no newspapers here—we could not but think of one, the fairest of the daughters of men, who long years ago, with others, came to carry water from this fountain, which still bears her name, and while the rest told all they knew, she devoutly “kept all these things to herself and pondered them in her heart.” There was certainly much about this fountain which seemed to us sacred and spoke to us of Mary the mother of Jesus and of her divine Son, who for a time came and dwelt among us that he might become our divine-human Redeemer, the Saviour of the world. There was something sacramental in standing here and witnessing the scenes that were so suggestive of the earthly life of our Lord.

We cannot take space to tell of the excellent Christian school there is here and of the orphan asylum connected with it, started by a wealthy English lady many years ago, and doing such an excellent work; nor of the little Protestant church, the pastor of which besides holding services every Sunday, walks over to Cana, of Galilee, and preaches every week; nor of the people we met, the children we saw, the shops we entered, nor of the beautiful lace and other needlework the women make, and the

carvings in stone and olive-wood by the men, all of which is so urgently pressed, at ridiculously low prices, upon the tourists as they pass.

The morning was dawning clear and beautiful, with not a cloud in the sky, as our cavalcade rode out of Nazareth and started for Tiberias and the Lake of Galilee. Ascending a steep hill we had a last look, at least for a time,—for we returned that way—at the childhood home of Jesus, nestling amid the gardens and pomegranate groves on the distant hillside. It was a charming view and we looked at it again and again, until passing around the shoulder of a hill, it was lost to view.

The ride is a very picturesque one, and we were a rather picturesque party.

As was said in a former chapter, of animals in our cavalcade there were three hundred and eighty-four—riding horses, pack-mules and donkeys. There were nearly two hundred riding horses for our party and the dragomen, and the other pack animals to carry all the tents, their furnishings, our food, and feed for the beasts, tables, table-ware, camp-chairs, cooking utensils, and other belongings. We were not far out on our way when our camp-tents and baggage passed us, hurrying ahead so that our "home" would be set up and our next meal ready before our arrival. The baggage animals carried bells and made a great din in passing. The bells

themselves are quite a local affair, being like three or four bells hanging within one another. They are not unmusical, but the general appearance of the procession was ludicrously shabby and droll. Yet we did not despise it at all, for it represented "home" to us for the time being.

But there were people in our party who looked ludicrous, as well as the pack-animals. Some of them had never been on horseback before, and we cannot say that their pose was very graceful, though not one failed to keep to his or her task with great pluck and persistence. Then, too, a few of the party were in palanquins. Now "palanquin" sounds decidedly Oriental and suggests a certain luxuriousness, but in this case, is deceptive. A palanquin is made of plain boards, painted brown and roofed with leather cloth, and looks like the body of a coupe swinging in the middle of and between two enormously heavy poles. These poles projecting far to the front and the rear form shafts between which the patient mules, one at each end, are securely harnessed. Of course, one poor beast plods along day after day with his nose close up to the back of the palanquin. The whole establishment is most comical in appearance, but invaluable in case one is too weary to ride horseback or is ill; though we never quite envied the people that rode in them, for the ups and downs of the two mules, picking their way over the

stony ground, gave the palanquin and its passenger a motion that we can compare only to that of a small boat in a storm at sea. The mules themselves are not much in evidence, for they well-nigh disappear under the amount of harness, saddle and gearing. But happily they are helped along by two dragomen, one at the head of each mule.

As we had gotten an early start we arrived at Tiberias, on the shore of Galilee, about noon, and had our lunch on the ground near the walls of the ruined castle, on the north side of the place, the hot sun beating down perpendicularly upon us. On our way we had passed through Cana of Galilee, where Christ performed his first miracle, of turning water into wine, and where is the reputed home of the apostle Nathaniel (Bartholomew); and alongside Mount Tabor, lying to the south; and the Horns of Hattin, lying to the north. This mountain is a two-topped hill with one peak rising much higher than the other, and, according to tradition, is the Mount of Beatitudes, where Christ preached the Sermon on the Mount to such a vast multitude. Just after we passed the Horns of Hattin we saw seven beautiful wild gazelles, one of our dragomen foolishly discharging his revolver at them, and ere long some storks and a jackal. But we will say little now of this part of the journey, for we made our stops and visits to the places of interest on our return, since

we came back as far as Nazareth by the same road. We will add only this, that when we reached the top of a high hill above Tiberias, and the whole view of the Lake of Galilee and its surroundings burst upon us at once, we were all simply charmed with the sight. The enthusiasm on all sides was intense. We do not believe it is possible to exaggerate the beauty of the scenery nor the amount of interest it is likely to awaken in the heart of every beholder, especially every one who cares at all for the gospel story. For it was here, in this beautiful territory, right here before our eyes, that Christ spent most of his public life and where most of his mighty works were done. Let any reader be assured that he is not wasting enthusiasm or fixing it upon an unworthy or disappointing spot when he sings,

“Galilee, bright Galilee,  
Hallowed thoughts we turn to thee,”

or,

“I love to think of Jesus as he sat beside the sea,  
And the waves came murmuring in upon the strand,”

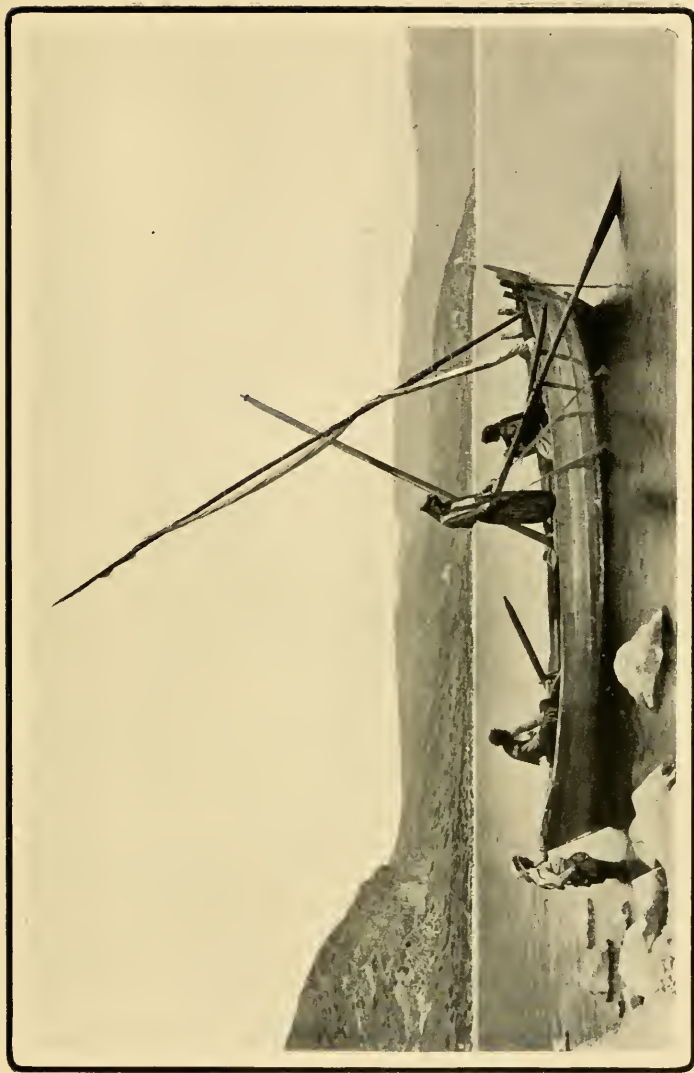
or when he conceives of it as one of the most beautiful regions it is possible for the eye to look upon.

## CHAPTER V.

### TIBERIAS AND A SAIL TO THE SHORES ON GALILEE.

THE BIBLE was not written for Orientals alone ; but it is well for us to remember always in reading it that it was written by Orientals, in Oriental lands, and in Oriental languages. It uses Oriental words and phrases and figures of speech. Its references are to Oriental customs and manners and scenes. It is perfectly plain, therefore, that the better we understand Oriental life and habits and languages the better will we understand this Oriental Book.

We do not mean to imply that any one who may read the Bible anywhere and in any language may not find gospel truth amply sufficient to make him wise unto salvation and to prove of inestimable help in his Christian life. But what we do mean to say is this, that there are degrees in the understanding of the Bible, and that there is great value in any studies that give us a knowledge of Oriental life or that cast upon the Bible lights from its Oriental source.



THE LAKE OF GALILEE.





It has been well said: "We are Westerners, and we live in a new age and under new conditions of life. To be sure, they are immensely better times and immensely better conditions of life, but they are essentially different from those in which the Bible was written. The result is that many of the figures of speech and of the references employed in the Bible as perfectly simple and intelligible to those for whom it was first written, now require explanation in order to be understood by those who have been trained in other parts of the world, in later times, and under changed conditions of life."

For example, when we read in the Bible that in the dark days of adversity there shall no longer be heard in the streets "the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride," we have nothing in our Occidental experiences to explain this common figure of speech. As some one has said, "Bridegrooms and brides, in our Western civilization, are not accustomed to cry or shout in the city streets—at least, so long as they live peaceably with one another! But when we learn that both the bride and the bridegroom in Oriental countries are accompanied through the streets by separate processions, and that hardly any event in Eastern social life is the occasion of such hilarity, or of such vociferous rejoicing as a marriage ceremony, we gain a fresh understanding of the force of this Bible illustration."

Similarly, the words of John the Baptist concerning his delight in the welcome given to Jesus as the Messiah are meaningless without an explanation of their Oriental significance. "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom," said John; "but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He shall increase, but I must decrease." Now, just what is the exact reference and meaning? It is this. In the east the bridegroom does not see his bride before their marriage, hard as that would seem to us! The "friend of the bridegroom" arranges the match. It may be a father, or mother, or a missionary—as is often the case in these days—or some other "go-between." But when the bridegroom meets the bride, if he is satisfied, he communicates the fact to the waiting guests, and their cry of rejoicing informs the friend of the bridegroom, the "go-between," of the good result, and of course greatly gratifies him with the knowledge that he has done his part well. John the Baptist had prepared the way for the coming of the Bridegroom, Jesus, to his Bride, the Church, and when he found that the union was hailed with delight he was glad to know that his mission was accomplished.

Again, when we hear Jesus sending out his disciples hurriedly to preach the gospel, and telling them,

“Salute no man by the way,” we would be quite at a loss to understand his meaning did we not know of the habit of Eastern greetings, with their long, time-consuming and almost senseless series of questions and answers, and of the numberless bowings and scrapings and genuflections employed. It was a command to the disciples to haste, to lose no time, to do their work quickly as its importance demanded.

Or when he sent them out two by two, telling them to take nothing for their journey, we must be at a loss till we comprehend the prevalence of the spirit of hospitality in the East.

Until we know of the primitive lamps of the Bible times, with their open receiver for oil or melted tallow, a simple rag or bit of flax for wick, and the care needed to keep the reservoir filled and the wick burning, how can we take in the full force of such a Bible expression as this: “The smoking flax shall he not quench;” which is intended to tell with peculiar emphasis of the tenderness and patient love of a Saviour who will even revive a dimly burning wick of spiritual life which otherwise would surely expire?

All that we have said of the importance of a study of the customs and manners and languages and times of the Bible, may be said with equal emphasis regarding the importance of a study of the land of the Bible—its mountains and hills and valleys, its

streams, its cities, its villages, its soil, its products, its people. As was said in the first chapter, the land illustrates the Book; the land illumines the Book; the land confirms the Book; the land intensifies the interest of the Book. A friend of the writer, recently returned from the Holy Land, remarked that since he had been to Palestine the Bible had become a new book to him. We wish to add our own testimony to his, and to assure the reader that this is practically the united voice of all Bible students who are privileged to visit the Holy Land.

But it is not our desire to indulge in any discussion about the land, but to give the reader, as we said before, so far as possible, a realistic vision of it—to have each one, even if it must be through the eyes of another, to see it as it really is. We therefore hasten on with the description of our journey from the point at which we closed in the last chapter.

We had had a good look at the beautiful Lake of Galilee from the hillside a thousand feet above, and had come down with our party to the camp, near the citadel, and just outside the broken walls of Tiberias.

The modern city of Tiberias occupies but a small portion of the site of the ancient city, of Herod Antipas, which extended much further to the south, possibly nearly to Hammath, a mile below, where are the hot sulphur springs and the baths that the

old Romans used to value so highly, and which are even still much frequented. This place, Tiberias, has had the reputation of being the filthiest city in Palestine, and we have reason to believe that may be a true estimate. It is especially famous as the residence of that diminutive animal who, when you put your finger on him, isn't there! The Arabs have a saying that the king of all the fleas resides in Tiberias.

The city was built by Herod, between 20 and 27 A. D., on the site of an old cemetery, and given its name in honor of Tiberias Cæsar, who was then the Emperor of the Roman Empire. This Herod was the man before whom Jesus was tried in Jerusalem, Luke 23:7, and the son of Herod the Great, who was king in Jerusalem when Christ was born. He was "tetrarch of Galilee and Perea," and made Tiberias his capital and the largest and most important city in his dominions. Here he had his palace and lived with Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, in comparative peace until the voice of John the Baptist came ringing up the Jordan valley protesting against his sin, Mark 6:18. From this city the order went out for John's arrest. It was here also that Herod had his birthday feast when the daughter of Herodias danced before him, Mark 6:14-29, and asked for John the Baptist's head in

a charger. It is not known that Christ ever visited the city.

After the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, Tiberias became the residence of the few Jews who were allowed to remain in Palestine. The Sanhedrim was transferred here from Sepphoris. In the second century the place became a noted seat of Hebrew learning, and continued to be so for nearly two hundred years. Here the traditions of the elders, which had been transmitted before for many generations orally, were committed to writing in the form now known as the Mishna. About the middle of the second century the Jerusalem Talmud was also compiled here, and here the work of the Masoretic critics was commenced, resulting in the "Western" or "Tiberian" pointing of the Hebrew Bible, which is now universally accepted. And not only do we get our Hebrew text from Tiberias, but indirectly we have our Latin translation from this city also; for it was a scholar of Tiberias from whom St. Jerome learned Hebrew, and so was able to translate the Old Testament into the Vulgate. It was here also lived the celebrated Jewish writer of the twelfth century, Maimonides, and here he died and was buried, his tomb being pointed out to us in the old unfenced graveyard back of the town. Christianity early obtained a foothold here, but found much opposition in the early heathenism and

the later Judaism of the city. It flourished notwithstanding, and by the fifth century there were Christian bishops in Tiberias. The Arabs conquered the city in 637, but the bishopric was reestablished by the Crusaders, though it was made subordinate to that of Nazareth.

The place as we see it today is surrounded by a wall, with four gates on the four sides of the quadrangle. It is further strengthened by strongly built towers, one at each corner and one midway the wall on every side. The wall is greatly shattered in many places, and entirely prostrate in some, while the large and massive castle at the northwest corner is also a ruin. This wreck was effected by a fearful earthquake which visited this region on January 1st, 1837. It not only ruined the walls, but it threw down most of the dwellings in the city and killed about one-half of the population. The walls where they are entire are about twenty feet high and from six to ten feet thick.

The town has a population of about six thousand, about two-thirds of whom are Jews, many of them being somewhat recent immigrants from Russia. They live largely on the alms sent from Europe, and may be seen wearing their heavy high hats and fur capes even in mid-summer. There are a number of synagogues in the place, a recently restored Mohammedan mosque, with its handsome minaret, a Latin



church and monastery, a church and monastery of the orthodox Greeks, a partly modernized building which bears the pretentious name of "Hotel Tiberias," and several excellent buildings belonging to the prosperous mission of the Free Church of Scotland, including a hospital. Aside from these, and possibly a few other prominent buildings, the town is made up of low, rambling, flat-roofed hovels, and is certainly in no wise an attractive place in which to live.

There is no other town of size on the lake, though this general region about Galilee was once densely populated, with at least nine cities of over fifteen thousand each, and the whole coast-line, varying from a narrow ribbon-like strip of green in some places to the over two-mile-wide Plain of Gennesaret toward the northwest end of the lake, was filled with a teeming multitude of people, engaged in agriculture, fishing, boat-building, and various other occupations.

Our visit to this northern portion of the lake was made in boats, heavy fishing-boats, holding about ten persons each, part of the time propelled by sails, and, when the wind did not blow hard enough, by four strong oarsmen. We wonder whether Christ was asleep in such a boat when the storm arose, and the disciples became "sore afraid." We think it must have been such, for the "little ships" of which



the evangelists speak, were nothing more nor less than fishing-boats, then in everyday use along these shores. And to think that the waves here have never been entirely at rest since they rippled against the shores at Jesus' feet! Is that Simon Peter's boat there in front of us? How easy it seemed for us to forget that we were looking at the men and women of today, and for us to imagine that we had before us the fisher-folk and the boats that swarmed this sea in those early days. It was a most enjoyable ride, for the water is most beautifully bright and clear, almost as delicate a blue as the Bay of Naples, and the atmosphere, though it was the seventh of March, was as soft and warm as on a pleasant summer evening. In its ordinary condition the whole lake is a water-mirror of rare beauty and reflective power, and the play of the lights and shadows on its surface and upon the surrounding hills, amid the ever-varying atmospheric changes from sunrise to sunset, greatly enhances the charm of its natural features. As some one has well said, "In the rich warm glow of the setting sun, which seems to impart to this lake-region a peculiar glory, the beloved disciples must often have witnessed the counterpart of that scene in holy vision, which he described as 'a sea of glass mingled with fire.'"

The first place we passed as we went up the western coast was El Mejdal, the Magdala of the New

Testament, the home of Mary Magdalene, the devoted friend of Jesus and to whom he first showed himself after his resurrection. It is a collection of hovels of mud and stone, about thirty in number, and certainly has a very desolate appearance. The place lies at the foot of a hill, close to the water's edge, and at the southern opening into the Plain of Gennesaret. Its name, Mejdol, is hardly altered from the ancient Magdala, or Magdol, so-called probably from a watch-tower—for that is the meaning of the name—of which the ruins appear to remain, that once guarded the entrance to the plain. The site is very beautiful, commanding a fine view of the sea.

A short distance from Mejdol, on the left side of the plain, lies the ruins of an ancient castle. The cliffs here are about one thousand one hundred and fifty feet in height and the castle consists of caverns in the rock. These caverns are connected by passages and protected by walls, and possess several old cisterns for the preservation of water and food. This inaccessible fastness was once the haunt of robbers. Herod the Great besieged them here, and only succeeded in reaching and breaking up their nest by letting down soldiers in cages by ropes to the mouths of the caverns. These caverns were afterwards occupied by hermits, and it is one of the strange sights of Palestine to-day to see so many

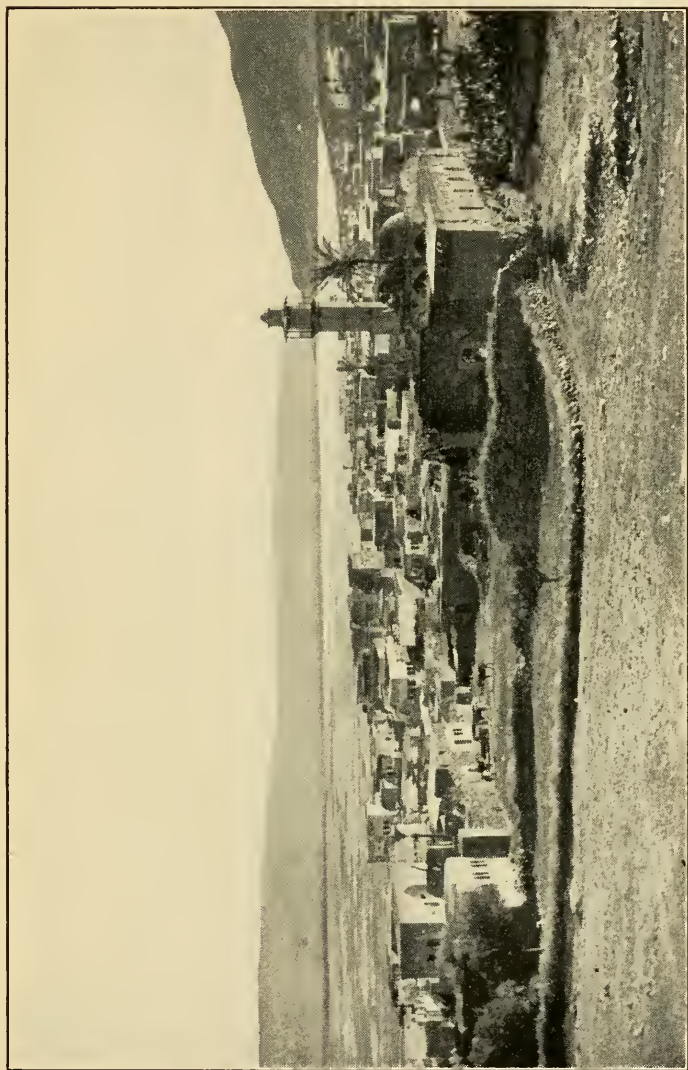
places in the mountain sides and on their tops, seemingly absolutely inaccessible, occupied by monks and hermits and so-called penitentiaries, or places of religious penance.

The next place to which we came was Khan Minyeh, now quite generally believed to be the site of the Capernaum of the New Testament times. It is at the other extremity of the Plain of Gennesaret, where the mountains again approach the sea. Here are two or three modern buildings and a mass of earth-covered ruins.

As the reader doubtless knows, volumes could be written, and some have been written, filled with arguments and citations of weighty authorities claiming for both Khan Minyeh and Tell Hum, several miles further up the shore, the honor or dishonor of being the site of Capernaum. There is a strong Christian tradition from the sixth century which fixes the place at Tell Hum, but tradition has erred regarding other sites. Maybe it has regarding this. Besides, Tell Hum is an impossible contraction from the Hebrew words Kepher-Nahum. Still more important, there is no tell, or hill, at Tell Hum, and there is one at Khan Minyeh. And there is no flowing stream to furnish water at Tell Hum and there is a most copious spring and the remains of an old Roman aqueduct at Khan Minyeh, or right at hand at Ain et Tineh, which name signifies "The

Fountain of Figs." Towering above the beautiful spring which issues from the rocks is a high cliff on the top of which is a small plateau, which was probably the acropolis where stood the citadel and palace, in the olden days, when Capernaum was the chief seat of Roman power in Palestine. The hill rises abruptly from the sea and forms the most conspicuous feature of the entire western shore line. Its height is about two hundred and fifty feet. If this be indeed the site, how striking are the words of Christ, which had a literal as well as a figurative meaning, "But thou, Capernaum which are exalted to heaven, shall be thrust down to hell!" The prophecy has been literally fulfilled, for no trace of the ancient magnificence of the city remains. Crowded marts of trade, Roman palaces and Jewish synagogues, have all disappeared and only a few huts and the old Roman aqueduct remain to indicate that a great and populous city once stood here.

As we also know, Capernaum was exalted in point of religious privilege above all the other cities of Galilee. It was the home of Jesus and his inner circle of disciples for nearly three years. Matthew speaks of it as "His own city," and another has called it "The central pulpit of our Lord's teaching," and still another speaks of it as "The birth-place of the Christian Church." Two at least of the apostles, Peter and Matthew, occupied houses



TIBERIAS.



in Capernaum, which were always open to the Master, Mark 1:29; Mark 2:14-15, and at some period in his earlier ministry Mary, the mother of Jesus, transferred her residence from Nazareth to Capernaum, Matt. 12:46; John 2:12. It was here Jesus came after his first miracle at Cana of Galilee, John 2:1-12. Rejected at Nazareth he made Capernaum his abode, Matt. 4:13-16; Luke 4:16-31. Near here was witnessed the miraculous draught of fishes, followed by the call of Simon Peter and Andrew, James and John, Matt. 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-20; Luke 5:1-11. In the synagogue he healed a demoniac, Mark 1:23-28; Luke 4:31-37. Soon after he healed here Peter's wife's mother, and many others that were brought to him, Matt. 8:14-17; Mark 1:29-34; Luke 4:38-41. From here he started on his first circuit with his disciples throughout Galilee, Matt. 4:23-25; Mark 1:35-39; Luke 4:42-44. He soon returned to Capernaum and the people flocked to him. It was here he healed the paralytic let down through the roof, Matt. 9:2-8; Mark 2:1-12; Luke 5:17-26. Here Matthew was called from the receipt of custom to follow him, Matt. 9:9, Mark 2:13-14; Luke 5:27-28. From Capernaum he retired to the mountains and chose his twelve apostles, Mark 3:13-19; Luke 6:12-19, and to the multitudes who followed him he preached the sermon on the mount,



Matt. 5-8; Luke 6:20-49. As he returned to Capernaum he healed the Roman centurion's servant, Matt. 8:5-13; Luke 7:1-10. Christ was in this vicinity when John the Baptist sent his disciples on their mission of inquiry, Matt. 11:2-19; Luke 7:18-35. It was undoubtedly here, at a Pharisee's house, that Jesus was anointed by a woman who had been a sinner, Luke 7:36-50. Near here were uttered the beautiful parables of the sower, Matt. 13:1-23; Mark 4:1-25; Luke 8:4-18, of the tares, of the mustard seed, of the leaven hid in a field, of a merchantman seeking goodly pearls, of the all-inclusive net cast into the sea, Matt. 13:24-53; Mark 4:26-34. It was here Matthew made Christ a feast, at his own house, and at which Christ gave his discourse with respect to association with publicans, Matt. 9:10-17; Mark 2:15-22; Luke 5:29-39. Here he raised to life Jairus' daughter, and healed the woman with an issue of blood, Matt. 9:18-26; Mark 5:22-43; Luke 8:41-56. In this same city he healed two blind men and cast out a dumb spirit, Matt. 9:27-34. It was to Capernaum the apostles returned and told Christ the results of their missionary circuit, and from whence he took them into retirement in a desert place on the other side of the sea of Galilee; but being followed by a multitude of people, after a day of teaching he fed the five thousand, Matt. 14:13-21; Mark 6:30-44; Luke



9:10-17; John 6:1-14. It was the night following this that he came to his disciples in the storm walking upon the water, Matt. 14:22-36; Mark 6:45-56; John 6:15-21. The multitude who had been miraculously fed the next morning sought Jesus and found him at Capernaum. There he taught them in the synagogue, giving his discourse upon the "bread of life," at which many were offended and left him; an occasion which Peter embraced to make a noble confession of faith, John 6:22-71. Pharisees and Scribes came here from Jerusalem and objected to his disciples' neglect of the tradition of the elders as to eating with unwashed hands, and Jesus replied to them, Matt. 15:1-20; Mark 7:1-23. He went from here to the region of Tyre and Sidon, Matt. 15:21-28; Mark 7:24-30, and on his return, having visited the region of Cæsarea Philippi, he miraculously provided the tribute money, Matt. 17:24-27; Mark 9:33. It was here at Capernaum the disciples contended among themselves who should be the greatest, and Christ exhorted them to humility, forbearance and brotherly love, Matt. 18:1-35; Mark 9:33-50; Luke 9:46-50. It was in this same city the seventy were instructed and from which they were sent out into every city whither Jesus would come, Luke 10:1-16. To this same general region Jesus returned after his resurrection, meeting a number of his disciples at a mountain

where he had appointed them, Matt. 28:16-20; Mark 16:15-18, as also on the shore of the Sea of Tiberias, John 21:1-24, and it was upon a mountain hereabout that he revealed himself to more than five hundred brethren at once, 1 Cor. 15:6.

About two miles further up the shore of the lake we came to the furthest point we visited, namely Tell Hum. As we have said, until recent times this was supposed to mark the site of Capernaum; but we think that now practically all who visit the shores of Galilee as well as leading scholars generally, agree that this more likely marks the site of Chorazin, and that Khan Minyeh marks the location of Capernaum.

The village consists of a dozen miserable huts. The famous ruins are surrounded by a high wall and belong to the Franciscan Monks, who own a hospice here, where refreshments are sold, and a small farm. In order to buy the land cheaply the monks covered up most of the ruins, but by and by excavations will be made.

On the eastern shore, farther south, we could see the site of Gergesa, "in the country of the Gadarenes." In the immediate vicinity of this town and landing-place was the scene of Christ's healing of the demoniac and of the destruction of the herd of swine.

Still further down the eastern shore, directly opposite Tiberias, we could plainly see the ruins of

the ancient Gamala, which was a well-nigh impregnable stronghold, made famous for its desperate resistance to the Romans. Caves, columns and other interesting remains may be seen.

But the really fertile and densely populated portion of the shores of Galilee was in the region we visited, in the Plain of Gennesaret and its vicinity. Over the most of its extent at the present time, this whole region has reverted to its primitive condition. Back of the silvery strand of the sea, made white by myriads of tiny shells, an almost continuous hedge of oleanders and tropical thorns hold back a confused mass of wild, luxuriant vegetation such as gives evidence, not to be disputed, of the wonderful fertility of the soil and of its adaptation to the growth of plants from widely different climes. There are no fences and no groups of trees to obstruct the vision between the limits of the sea and the mountains, and at many points the whole region and its borderings may be seen at a glance.

This region is laden with the most sacred associations. The story of Galilee, and especially of the vicinity of the Plain of Gennesaret, is the story of the larger part of the public ministry of Jesus. "Here by the mountain side and lake side and in the crowded synagogues he preached the gospel of the Kingdom. Here he healed the sick, cleansed the lepers, opened the eyes of the blind, cast out demons,

calmed the raging of the winds and of the waves by a word, walked upon the sea to rescue his imperiled disciples, comforted the sorrowing, gave rest to the weary and heavy laden, and awakened from the sleep of death the little daughter of the ruler of the synagogue." Here most of his mighty works were done and most of his gracious words were spoken.

As one reads the Bible and then looks at the surroundings, sees the frame of nature into which as a picture the narrative fits so well, there comes into the mind an overwhelming conviction that what he is reading is all true! Absolutely true! We believe that it would be an impossible thing for an unbeliever to sit on the shores of Galilee and read the scenes described in the Book, and then look at the places with his eyes, and at the end of the perusal rise and say, "I don't believe it!" His own eyes would convince him of the reality.

After examining the ruins of Tell Hum as far as we might, and a stroll along the pebbled shore, filling our pockets with the tiny shells, for souvenirs, we pointed our boats for the eight-mile run back to Tiberias, arriving just as the shadows of night closed down on us. It was a glorious evening; and as we sat in the boat and sang ourselves, or listened to the plaintive strains of the Syrian songs from the native boatmen, and as we saw the wondrous

glow of the setting sun, and watched the varying shades of crimson and yellow and purple and a peculiarly ethereal tint of the light blue upon the surface of the sacred lake and upon the mountains and valleys and shores of the sea, we are sure there was not one heart in all the company that did not turn in loving recollection to that Divine Friend of us all who

“Once along that rugged shore,  
He who all our sorrows bore,  
Journeyed oft with weary feet,  
Through the storm or burning heat,  
Healing all who came in faith,  
Calling back the life from death;  
King of kings from heaven was he,  
Though so poor by Galilee.”

But every member of that party and every one of our readers, too, has reason to be glad,—with oh what depth of reason to be glad—that

Still in loving tenderness  
Doth the Master wait to bless;  
Still His touch upon the soul  
Bringeth balm and maketh whole.  
Still He comforts mourning hearts,  
Life, and joy, and peace imparts;  
Still the sinner's Friend is He,  
As of old by Galilee!”

## CHAPTER VI.

### OUR FACES TOWARD JERUSALEM:

OUR BELIEF in the integrity of the Scriptures does not rest upon one argument, but upon many. Some of these grounds are definite, positive and convincing by the very force of history and logic and strong reasoning. There are other arguments that are just as strong though very simple and incidental and un-wrought-out. Now, one of the happy results of a visit to Palestine is that it adds much force in one's mind to these natural, unstudied, incidental evidences—the land bearing such frequently-recurring and remarkable testimony to the Book.

Prominent, therefore, among the many evidences that the historical writers of the New Testament were eye-witnesses of the events which they record, or else obtained their information from those who were, is this—their unvarying fidelity to circumstances of time and place. The same is seen also in their most incidental references to manners and customs, and even to the natural phenomena of winds and weather and the products of the soil. A

fictitious narrative, located in a country with which the writer is not familiar, must either avoid all local allusions or else be found frequently in conflict with the peculiarities of the place, time, manner or customs, or, as is more likely, with all of these. It was exactly this sort of difficulty that led the Englishman who had a friend coming to New York to ask to be remembered to a relative of his who lived in Texas, or that prevents many from feeling sure whether Hainan is a town, a district, or a province in China, or maybe an island! It is hard for one correctly to describe any country he has not seen, and with which he is not perfectly familiar.

And when a writer is not an eye-witness of that which he records, if the narrative requires him to enter very much into details, or especially if he must describe locations and scenery and people, it becomes almost impossible for him to avoid falling into numerous errors of statement.

That there is a most exact and wonderful agreement between the land and the Book, is an often-remarked and well known fact. The plains, the mountains, the valleys, rivers, lakes, cities, deserts are in all parts of the Scriptures correctly named and correctly located. But this correspondence goes much farther and into the most trivial and incidental details, such as no writer of a fictitious narrative could possibly make so invariably correct. For



example, the various political divisions known to have existed in the country are always recognized in the narrative, as are also the changes of government through which the country passed in its long and varied history. These exact incidental correspondences become all the more remarkable, too, when we recall the fact that the Bible was written not by one author, who could be careful to bring his material all together and make it consistent, but that it was written by over thirty different authors, living in different ages, extending through a period of over fifteen hundred years.

Yet more impressive is the fact of the extreme minuteness to which this agreement extends. It is not limited to general features, such as could become known by a study of the geography or the history of a land, but it reaches to such matters, mentioned only incidentally, too, as the relative levels of different places in Palestine, or references to the sorts of flowers or shrubs or trees that grow in certain regions, or to the prevailing winds, or the peculiarities of climate, and such like. For instance, in all the books, from Genesis on, the invariable expressions for a journey between Egypt and Canaan are "down to Egypt" and "up out of Egypt," which is exactly true. The angel of the Lord who talked to Abraham went "down" from Hebron to Sodom. Jacob was commanded to "go up" from the plain



near Shechem to Bethel. Joshua and his army "went up" against Ai. Samson "went down" when he went among the Philistines. The men of Kirjath-jearim were requested to "come down" to Beth-shemish and take the ark "up" to their city. The man who fell among thieves "went down from Jerusalem to Jericho." And everywhere, both in the Old Testament and in the New, people went "up" to Jerusalem, every road in the land leading to that city running upward in fact, except the short one from Bethlehem. In every case, though the reference was but casual and incidental, the relative elevation of the place was correctly recognized.

By one writer, just in reciting a fable, reference is made to the trees going forth to choose for themselves a king, the crown being offered first to the olive, next to the fig, next to the vine; which is the exact order of importance in which these stand in Palestine, and in no other land.

In some countries rain is brought by east winds and heat by south winds, but in recounting Pharaoh's dream the blasted ears of corn are referred to as "blasted by the east wind," and an east wind it was which withered Jonah's gourd and was so hot as to cause Jonah himself to faint. On the contrary it was the west wind which brought rain. This is what Christ referred to when he said to the Jews: "When ye see a cloud arise out of the west, straight-

way ye say, there cometh a shower, and so it is." Now these expressions agree exactly with the facts. This is because of the situation of Palestine, and of Egypt and Assyria, so far as the east wind is concerned. There lies to the east of all these countries a hot, barren desert, from which no rain can come, but that does send a dry and scorching wind which is the terror of the people; while Palestine has to the west of it the Mediterranean Sea, the only body of water which can supply her thirsty air with clouds heavy enough for rain.

Then, too, there are incidental references to customs, which, however peculiar they may be, are always spoken of in a way exactly in consonance with the facts. There are references to eating, such as "dipping the hand in the dish," to the measuring of grain into one's "bosom," to the casting of grass "into the oven," to the "digging" of a wine-press, to the having "a tower in a garden." These references are all perfectly natural to the customs of the country. When we speak of a storm we usually say that it *arose*, as, "Toward evening a great storm arose." But when a storm is mentioned as visiting the lake of Galilee, though it seems quite accidentally, the words of the account are, "There came down a storm of wind on the lake." The fact is quite exceptional, but it is a fact nevertheless that the causes of storms on Galilee are the high mountains

which surround the lake, and the disturbances literally *come down* upon it.

Now, we have a special reason for mentioning these facts just here, namely, because they get such remarkable exemplification in that portion of Palestine over which the journey from Galilee to Jerusalem is to take us. Here we are to go over hills and valleys, past wells and springs and streams and growing crops, past towns and forts and sepulchres, one of the most varied portions of all Palestine, and yet the Bible references are always exact and exactly in accord with the facts as we find them to-day.

At the close of our last chapter we had returned from a sail on Lake Galilee. We had examined its sites along the shores and were back at Tiberias ready to start in the morning back down the country toward Jerusalem. The first seventeen miles brought us back to Nazareth, past the Horns of Hattin, past Cana of Galilee—the home of Nathanael and where Christ performed his first miracle, that of turning water into wine—down to our original camping ground on the threshing-floor at Nazareth.

As we are not now hurrying toward the Sea of Galilee we take space to give a somewhat more ample description of what is to be seen along the way. About five miles on our way from Tiberias we came to the isolated hill we mentioned, known by the Arabs as Karn Hattin. This is the traditional “Mountain

of the Beatitudes," Matt. 5:1, where our Lord delivered the Sermon on the Mount, the grandest discourse which ever fell upon human ears. This mountain, or ridge, is projected toward the north-east into a plain from which it rises somewhat abruptly to an altitude of five hundred feet, or one thousand one hundred and thirty-five feet above sea level. It is a double-topped mountain, crowning, as we have indicated, an elevated plateau. It is from its two horns or elevations that it derives its name, "Horns of Hattin." Between these two summits there is a depression forming a natural amphitheatre about six hundred feet across, where thousands of people could recline upon the green grass and sweet wild flowers. The southern horn is the higher, and here Christ could well have sat with his disciples around him, while the multitude listened from the amphitheatre below. At his feet, to the northeast, surrounded by its ribbon of plain and circle of hills, lay the beautiful Sea of Galilee, fully two thousand feet below him. To the south, Tabor rose in full view, a rounded elevation standing apart from the hills. Beyond, to the west, were the mountains of Nazareth. On the north were the hills of Adash, beyond which towered the snowy Hermon in crystal grandeur. At his feet lay the lovely plains and fertile valleys of Galilee, green with verdure and beautiful with wild flowers. Crowning the sum-



RESTING NEAR THE HORNS OF HATTIN.



WOMEN AND CHILDREN AROUND THE SPRING AT CANA.



mit of a not distant hill to the north was the gray, picturesque village of Safed, "a city set on a hill that could not be hid," which evidently furnished to our Saviour his illustration. Around the base of the mountain upon which he sat, and stretching away as far as the eye could see them we doubt not, there were thousands of the lilies of the field in full bloom, as we saw them during our visit, and toward which he stretched out his hand and said, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." With deep emotion we stood in this sacred spot and pictured to ourselves the scene as he "who spake as never man spake" delivered that wonderful sermon.

It was on the plain at the base of this hill that Saladin defeated the Franks on the 3d and 4th of July, 1187, thereby giving the death-blow to the power of the Latin or Christian kingdom in Palestine. It was a rocky and waterless spot where Guy de Lusignan, Christian king of Jerusalem, camped on the night of July 3d. Already his men were practically surrounded, and when the next day they joined their final battle they were disheartened and disorganized, and all but perishing with the heat and their great thirst. By evening their army was routed, their king a prisoner, and the Holy Cross the spoil of the infidel.



At a distance of about seven miles from the Horns of Hattin we re-entered Kefr Kenna, or the "village of Kenna," through which we had already passed on our way from Nazareth to Tiberias. But we took time now for a more careful survey of its surroundings and to visit the places of interest pointed out by our conductors.

As is well known, Kefr Kenna is identified by the majority of scholars with Cana of Galilee, where the Saviour's first miracle was wrought, of turning water into wine, relieving the embarrassment of his host, at the wedding feast, John 2:1-11. It is situated on the westward slope of a hill, with a copious and unfailing spring adjoining it on the southwest. This is the one fountain from which from time immemorial the people have taken water, and it was undoubtedly from it the water was drawn which Christ turned into wine. At the spring a fine old sarcophagus serves as a watering trough, and the women and children may be seen coming and going with their water pots at all hours of the day. The modern village has a population of about six hundred, half being Moslems, most of the remainder being Greek Christians, with few Latins and a still smaller number of Protestants. The village itself is uninviting, with filthy narrow streets, and refuse heaps at every corner. The traditional place of Christ's miracle is kept in memory by a small, plain



Greek church, in which the priest showed us one of the water-pots said to have been used in the miracle. There are a few poor but interesting paintings in the church, one being the marriage scene. The priest was very obliging and courteous and showed us these and other relics of interest, including a fine old copy of the Gospels, which the people kiss but, we are sorry to say, do not read.

Not far from the Greek church is another, held by the Latins, in charge of Franciscan monks. It occupies the site of a very ancient building, thought to have been the former synagogue of the place. The monks contend that the water-pots of Christ's miracle were not filled from the common spring, but from the cistern of the house next to the synagogue. This cistern they think they have found, and in a partly excavated form they showed it to us. A building, to preserve it, was in process of being erected over it.

Another small church shown us is said to be on the site of the house of the apostle Nathanael (Bartholomew), John 21:2.

Besides being the place of the first miracle, John 2: 11, and the home of Nathanael, John 21: 2, a third Biblical event is located at Cana. It is the place where Jesus received the nobleman from Capernaum whose son was healed in accordance with his word, John 4: 46-54.

There are some fine olive orchards at Cana, the gardens at the foot of the hill are luxuriant, and the pomegranates produced here are said to be the best in Palestine.

A little to the north of Cana we caught a glimpse of the little village known as El Meshed. It is on the site of the ancient Gath-hepher, the home of the prophet Jonah, 2 Kings 14:25, who, it will be remembered, took ship at Joppa for Tarshish when commanded to go to Ninevah, the ancient capital of Assyria, Jonah 1:1-17. Jonah fled, it is true, but he could not escape "from the presence of the Lord." We were told that Jonah's tomb could be visited at Gath-hepher, but as we were hastening toward Nazareth we did not turn aside to see.

A little to the southeast of Cana lies Mt. Tabor, which during our morning ride has stood off to our left, in a very imposing manner. It was a magnificent sight. Its truncated cone towered grandly over the great plain of Esdraelon, upon the northeastern confines of which it stands, one thousand three hundred feet high from its base and one thousand eight hundred sixty-five above sea level. This is one of the most interesting mountains in Palestine, and for a long time, on the authority of Origen and St. Jerome, was thought to be the scene of the transfiguration, Matt. 17:1-9. But this belief has given way before closer study of the Gospel narrative,

which makes it probable that the transfiguration took place in the neighborhood of Cæsarea Philippi and on some part of Mt. Hermon. The base and sides of the mountain are studded with oaks, pistacias and other trees and bushes. It presents to the eye as seen from the distance, a beautiful appearance, on account of being so remarkably symmetrical in its proportions. Its majesty, grace and park-like beauty are often referred to in the Scriptures. It was a rabbinical saying, showing the Jewish estimate of the attractions of the locality, that the temple ought to have been built there. Its beauty and representative character are shown by such Bible expressions as these; "As Tabor is among the mountains, and as Carmel by the sea," etc., Jer. 46:18, and "The north and the south Thou hast created them; Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in Thy name," Ps. 89:12. Tabor formed the boundary line between Issachar and Zebulon. Christ and his disciples must have passed often at the foot of this mountain in the course of their frequent journeyings in the different parts of Galilee. At that time the top of the hill was crowned with a city of considerable size. It was at this mountain Barak, at the command of Deborah, assembled his forces, and, at the opportune moment, descended thence, with ten thousand men into the plain, and conquered Sisera on the banks of the Kishon, Judges 4:5-15. It was on Tabor also

that the brothers of Gideon were slain by Zeba and Zalmunna, Judges 8:18, 19. This same mountain is intended when it is said of Issachar and Zebulon, in Deut. 33:19, that "they shall call the people unto the mountain; there they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness." Two monasteries now occupy the top of the hill, one of the Greek Church and one of the Latin. Within the Latin monastery, we are told, there are still to be seen the ruins of a Crusaders' church of the twelfth century, consisting of nave and aisles and three chapels in memory of the three tabernacles which Peter wished to build. The Greek monastery and chapel also stand on the site of a very ancient church, said to be of the fourth or fifth century. The Greeks and Latins differ as to the actual spot where the transfiguration took place, each claiming it to be within their own church.

It is less than five miles from Cana to Nazareth, and, as we have said, we were ere long back at our original camping-place there.

Our way from here on was straight south toward Jerusalem, and over the very road Christ and his disciples must often have traveled on their journeys between the Holy City and Galilee. The road almost all the way was nothing but a narrow foot-path and often so rough and rocky that it was almost impossible to progress at all. Our caravan struggled along single file and often drawn out

to a length of one, two and sometimes three miles. If the road were no better in the time of Christ's boyhood and they traveled in the same way this would easily account for how his parents could have gotten so far as they were out from Jerusalem before they missed him. They supposed he was back among some of their friends in the caravan.

Riding down from Nazareth into the Valley of Jezreel we had in plain sight before us Endor and Nain, two familiar places of Biblical note. They lie near the base on the north side of the Hill Moreh, or, as it is more familiarly known, "Little Hermon." Endor, as the reader will recall, is the place to which Saul on that memorable night repaired, under the cover of darkness, to consult the witch, and from which he returned to Mount Gilboa a doomed man. The city of Nain is even more familiar, being the place where Christ halted the funeral procession which was bearing the corpse of the only son of a widowed mother, and, commanding the dead to arise, restored him to the widow's arms. It is beautifully situated, commanding a magnificent landscape view, hence, perhaps, its name, which means "beauty." Just east of the village are some ancient tombs to one of which, no doubt, the widow's son was being removed when the wonderful miracle was performed. What must have been the thought of that mother with her grief so suddenly and unexpectedly turned to joy!

Passing through the waving wheat-fields in the valley of Jezreel—for though it was but the ninth of March the weather was like July and the wheat was beginning to head out and ripen—and going around Little Hermon at its western end we soon came in sight of Shunem, a place rendered dear to every lover of the Bible by the beautiful, sweet story of the rich Shunammite woman who prepared a prophet's chamber in her house, and where Elisha so often found a home and shelter from the noon-tide sun as he passed that way, a kindness which he fully appreciated and which was akin to that shown by the sisters of Bethany to the Saviour. Below the village were the barley fields where the reapers were at work, and to which the child, the pride and joy of his parents, went out when his father was with the reapers. He had been there but a short time when he came to his father and said, "My head! my head!" being suddenly sun-struck. Since riding over the plain of Jezreel almost overcome with the heat and glare of the sun out of a clear sky, these words of the child have come to us with a new force and meaning. The father directed that the child be carried "to his mother." The account continues, "And he sat on her knees till noon and then died. And she went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, and shut the door upon him and went out." Then follows the statement of her

hastening to Mount Carmel, which, though in full view, lies twelve miles away. She poured out her great sorrow at the feet of Elisha, who, to her unspeakable joy restored the child to life again. We could not help thinking as we were passing of how beautifully God rewards those who show kindness to his servants.

The region about Shunem belonged in the portion of the tribe of Issachar, and fortunate indeed must its people have been to possess such fine and fertile land as is seen in this vicinity.

## CHAPTER VII.

### JEZREEL, JENIN AND DOTHAN.

**C**ONTINUING our journey through the wheat-fields of the valley of Jezreel and by and by up an elevation of about four hundred feet, we came to the site of the ancient city of Jezreel, which gave its name to this entire plain. The Arabs call the modern village Zerin. It is a collection of miserable hovels of mud and stone, but into the walls of these and scattered about on the ground are many pieces of ancient masonry. The most conspicuous object is the ruin of an old church, a part of whose walls stand twenty or thirty feet high. The village is most beautifully situated, having a view that takes in the whole of the plain of Esdraelon, with the mountain-rim that bounds two sides of its triangle.

Jezreel, as the reader will recall, was the royal residence of Ahab and Jezebel, and has been the scene of many thrilling events in the history of Israel. Its associations call up the names in turn of Gideon and Saul, Elijah and Naboth, Ahab and Jezebel, Joram and Ahaziah, and of Jehu the swift driver and the equally swift avenger of the crimes com-





THE PLAIN OF ESDRAELON FROM JENIN.



THE TOWER OF JEZREEL.



mitted by the bloody house of Ahab. Rock-cut wine presses on the slope near the village suggest the vineyard of Naboth, which was hard by the palace of Ahab. One reads here with intensest interest the account of Ahab's covetousness. Naboth loyally clung to his inheritance. "The Lord forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee," were his words to the king. But Jezebel, the heathen princess from Tyre, the woman who, more than any one else, led Israel into idolatry—the unscrupulous Jezebel—had no conscience about a matter of such little importance to her as a man's ancestral possessions, and, procuring the necessary two witnesses, she not only took the land, but put Naboth to death, and gave his land to the king. Then came the fearful judgments of the Lord upon them both. The dogs licked the blood of the one, from his chariot in Samaria, and ate the flesh of the other by the wall of Jezreel, whither she had been thrown by her own servants from a high window in her palace. Truly God has written in letters of blood across the field of Naboth, "Beware of covetousness."

The hill on which stood the summer home of Ahab is now barren and desolate. Here and there broken columns and finely executed capitals lie scattered over the site where once stood magnificent palaces. Ahab certainly showed good taste and judg-

ment in selecting this place as the site of his summer palace, avoiding both the heat and the contracted view of his capital at Samaria. And Saul with his army when posted here before his last and fatal battle certainly had an admirable defensive position against the Philistine host drawn up at Shunem. For immediately in front of Jezreel to the north there is an almost perpendicular descent of four hundred feet into the valley of Jezreel and up which the Philistine army would have to clamber in making any attack. The western side of the hill stretches off in a direction nearly due south to the vicinity of Jenin, while the northern side runs in almost a straight line south by southeast until it suddenly breaks down into the Jordan valley, about twelve miles distant. This northern, or more strictly speaking, northeastern side is almost perpendicular, while the western side has a gradual slope. It is doubtless over this western slope of the mountain Saul and his men were retreating when he and his sons were slain.

Almost due west, and sixteen miles distant, we could distinctly see the place of Elijah's sacrifice on Mount Carmel. It is plain that when Ahab was returning to Jezreel from the stirring scenes of the slaughter of the false prophets, followed by the black clouds of the coming rain, and preceded by the rugged form of Elijah, his chariot could be seen

from the walls of Jezreel every foot of the way. This, of course, was before the death of Jezebel, and it was from these same walls, and from the face of Jezebel that a little later Elijah fled in a fit of discouragement far into the southern wilderness of Judea, and throwing himself in despair under a juniper tree wished that he might die.

Leaving Jezreel we pursued our journey southward to Jenin, an important town of about fifteen hundred inhabitants. It is the seat of a subordinate Turkish governorship and of a small garrison of soldiers. The village is supposed to be the ancient En Gannim, of Old Testament history, a city of Issachar, which was given to the Levites. It is beautifully situated, lying as it does, at the entrance of the great valley of Esdraelon, the battle-field of Palestine. On the hillside back of the town is a copious fountain from which the place derives its name—En Gannim meaning “garden-spring,” or “fountain of gardens.” A modern aqueduct leads the water from the fountain into the town where it empties clear and sparkling into an artificial basin. Here the women of the town are constantly coming and going, lingering to chat and gossip, and the children play in the stream that is led away to irrigate the gardens below, for the town is surrounded on the south and west by luxuriant gardens of vegetables and fruits, and by occasional clusters of palm trees.

The place is a favorite camping place for tourists, the principal attractions being the abundance of shade, a good location for tents on high ground, and the excellent fountain we have mentioned. It was here our party camped over Sunday. We were honored by a call from the governor, through his son and an interpreter, and returned the call through a committee of five or six of our party. The governor informed us that we composed the largest party that had ever camped at one time at the place, and set before us Turkish cigarettes and coffee. Our spokesman, Rev. Dr. S. Edward Young, of Pittsburgh, who could speak a little French, in endeavoring to be somewhat social with the governor told him that there was very deep snow on the ground when he left home. He endeavored to tell him just how deep it was, meaning to convey in French that it was fifteen inches. But noting the extreme astonishment on the part of the governor he reviewed his faulty French to find that instead of saying it was fifteen inches deep he had said that it was fifteen hundred feet! The reader can imagine the laugh that the governor, his staff and we all had at our obliging interpreter's expense.

In the afternoon we had an open air service on a little mound at one side of our camp. Though a Mohammedan, the governor was represented at it by his son and the members of his staff, and practically

the whole population of the village, men, women and children, gathered around. There were a few Turkish soldiers there who made some official but entirely unnecessary show of keeping order. The people seemed intensely interested and were very quiet, especially when we sung our hymns. Knowing that they could not understand our language we spoke but briefly, but sang a great deal. They seemed like people with hungry eyes and hungry ears and hungry hearts, and we are sure the gospel of Christ would be welcome among them if some one could carry it to them in the right way and in their own language.

In the morning ere the sun was up we were quite out on the way toward Dothan and Samaria and Shechem, which latter place was to be our camping ground the next night. After a short ride we came down into the famous plain of Dothan. It is a lovely crescent-shaped basin almost encircled by hills, and is still famous as a rich pasture ground to which the shepherds and herdsmen resort when the verdure of the hills and more elevated plains becomes dry and parched with the drought of summer. Hither it was that the sons of Jacob wandered with their herds, and hither, too, Joseph, in obedience to his father's wishes, followed in search of his brethren, over the mountains, and through the glens from the place of the original paternal roof in Shechem, seventeen miles away; though he had come,



as we know, from far south of Hebron. Through this plain passes the ancient caravan route which for thousands of years has been worn by the feet of the merchantmen of the East carrying their goods toward the south. It was along this road the Midianite merchantmen were passing who offered Joseph's brethren the opportunity of disposing of him finally, without imbuing their hands in his blood. Well to the south on the west side of the plain we were shown the pit where tradition says the young lad was placed and was about to be left to perish. But since this pit is more like a well of good water, we think it much more likely to be the spring about which Joseph's brethren were encamped, and that he was placed in one of the dry cisterns that are found in the vicinity. A large mound of ruins near by is known as Tell Dothan, or Hill Dothan, thus retaining the very name by which the place was known in the days of the patriarchs.

This place was also connected with the history of the prophet Elisha. He was dwelling here at the time the generals of Ben-hadad, king of Syria, assured him that "Elisha, the prophet that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bed-chamber." Ben-hadad therefore decided to capture the prophet and "sent thither horses, and chariots, and a great host." These came by night and encompassed the city. What a sight it



must have been on the following morning to see all this plain filled with the burnished shields and gleaming spears of the Syrian hosts! No wonder the young man who attended Elisha, probably from the school of the prophets, cried out for very fear, "Alas, my master! how shall we do?" But Elisha was calm. Through spiritual eyes he saw other than Syrian hosts, and replied to the alarmed young man: "Fear not, for they that are with us are more than they that be with them." Then he prayed that the eyes of the young man might be opened, "And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha." What an imposing spectacle it must have been! And what a lesson it teaches of God's love and care surrounding us like a protecting host in every time of terror or trial! We can assure our readers that these thrilling old stories came back to us laden with new force and meaning as we passed along amid the very scenes in which they were laid.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### SANUR AND SAMARIA.

**F**ROM Dothan to Samaria is about eight miles. We passed numerous villages along the way, about which it would be interesting to write, the most important place historically being the former fortress of Sanur. The place was besieged in 1830 and captured with much difficulty by Abdullah, pasha of Acre, the occasion being that the shekh of Sanur had declared himself independent. Later Ibrahim Pasha, of Egypt, destroyed the fortress entirely.

A few miles more and a hard climb up the side of the hill brought us to the ancient city of Samaria, so long the capital of the kings of Israel, or the "Northern Kingdom." The city was first built by Omri, king of Israel, the father of Ahab, who purchased the site from Shemer. He made it the royal city and gave it the name of Shomeron, or Samaria, "after the name of Shemer, the owner of the hill." The selection of this site for his capital was a demonstration of the military skill of Omri, for the situation was almost impregnable. The

city was built on an isolated hill about five hundred feet high, one thousand four hundred and fifty-four feet above the sea level, completely surrounded by an almost circular valley, and this again by a circle of mountains nearly all higher than the city itself. As some one has said: "Its site might be compared to that of a conical swell in the centre of a deep saucer." For twenty-five centuries and more the place has had a checkered and memorable career, and though often besieged during the period of Bible history it was never taken but once, and that after an awful siege of three years duration. Here were witnessed many of the most stirring events in the lives of Elijah and Elisha. Here it was that Elisha the Tishbite, from the mountains of Gilead, not more than forty miles away, came to the court of Ahab, in the midst of his wicked, idolatrous worship, and standing in the midst of the splendors of his ivory palace made this startling announcement to the king: "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word;" and James tells us that "it rained not upon the earth by the space of three years and six months." Here, too, it was that Obadiah remained faithful to God amid the splendors of this corrupt court, even caring for the prophets of God through the sore distress of the three years' famine, by hiding them in caves and

feeding them on bread and water. Here in the midst of that same drought Ahab divided the country between himself and Obadiah, to seek, if possible, amidst its former fountains and brooks, a little "grass to save the horses and mules alive"—apparently it mattering little to the wretched, hard-hearted king if his people died by thousands, if only he could find food and water to maintain the life of his horses! Here also it was, probably a little to the west among the hills, that Elijah confronted Ahab in his vain search for grass and challenged him to assemble all Israel on Mount Carmel to a demonstration as to whether it was Elijah that was troubling Israel, or whether it was not the king himself, by forsaking the commandments of the Lord and following after Baalim. Here Jezebel, the wicked queen, caused the prophets of the Lord to be slain, while she maintained at her own table and at her own expense eight hundred and fifty false prophets, ministers of Baal and of the graves. Here one reads with peculiar interest the striking incidents of the siege of Samaria by the Syrians under Ben-hadad, king of Damascus. It was during this siege that the two starving women made a compact to eat their children, and that the four leprous men determined, rather than die of starvation, to go to the camp of Syrians, and when they came found all as silent as the grave, for the

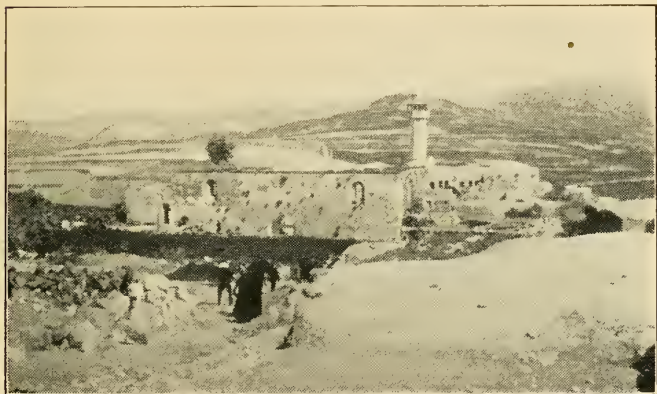
Syrians had fled at some imaginary danger, every man for his life.

It was in the midst of this distressing famine from the siege that Elisha declared that within twenty-four hours a measure of fine flour would be sold for a shekel, and one of the court officers exclaimed, "If the Lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be?" That scoffer lived to see the fulfillment of Elisha's words before his eyes, but he was trodden down by the people in the gate in their rush for the flour and barley. It was also to this city that Naaman, the great Syrian general, but a leper, came to be healed, and from which Gehazi ran after the healed man to accept the gifts Elisha had refused. It was upon his return with the coveted treasures that Gehazi received the stern rebuke of the prophet; "Is it time to receive money, and to receive garments, and olive yards, and vineyards, and sheep, and oxen, and men-servants, and maid-servants?" And Gehazi went out from the presence of Elisha a leper as white as snow. It was to this same city also that Elisha led the Syrian army from Dothan smitten with blindness, and, instead of smiting them with the sword caused bread and water to be set before them, and, after he had fed them, sent them away in peace.

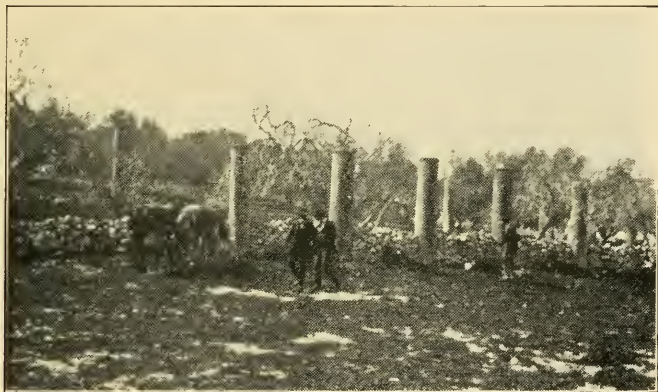
Notwithstanding the many acts of mercy shown by God to Samaria through the prophets, the wor-

ship of Baal was firmly established by Ahab and his queen. For this and the wickedness of the inhabitants the burden of prophecy came against the city, and one cannot even look at the ruins and desolation of the present miserable village, and all around and about the hill of Samaria, without recalling to mind such words of the Lord as these: "Samaria shall become desolate, for she hath rebelled against her God." Hos. 13:16. "I will make Samaria as an heap of the field, and as plantings of a vineyard, and I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley, and I will discover the foundations thereof." Micah 1:6. These prophecies have been literally fulfilled, for Samaria is at this moment a "heap of the field" and her foundations are in sight. The first intimation our party had that we were nearing the city's site at all was the seeing of cut and carved stones that time had "poured down" the side of the hill "toward the valley."

The city has been destroyed and rebuilt a number of times. It is now a small village called Sebaste, or Sebastiyeh, from the Greek word for Augustus. The emperor Augustus had presented the town to Herod the Great, who caused it to be handsomely restored and fortified, and gave it this name in honor of the giver; but the old name of Samaria has persisted through all the centuries.



THE CHURCH OF ST. JOHN IN SAMARIA, NOW A MOSQUE.



RUINS OF HEROD'S TEMPLE, SAMARIA.





Though it is now but a small hamlet there are abundant traces of its former greatness. Ruined columns and broken arches scattered everywhere speak eloquently of its former grandeur. Terraces ran around the hill from top to bottom. On the second terrace from the top stand the remaining pillars of a magnificent double colonnade built by Herod the Great. The colonnade was sixty feet wide and swept around the hill in beauty, "A gleaming coronet of marble," for a distance of over five thousand feet. Over seventy of these columns are standing after nineteen centuries and many others lie half or wholly buried beneath the soil, or scattered on the lower terraces. The columns, all of which have lost their capitals, are sixteen feet high, and most of them are monoliths.

The largest of the ruined structures yet remaining on the slope of the hill is the Church of St. John the Baptist, built by the Crusaders in the twelfth century. St. Jerome is the first author who mentions the tradition that it was here John was beheaded. The church was converted into a mosque at an early period in Mohammedan history. Unfortunately, in a reconstruction in 1894 the original form of the building was almost entirely obliterated. The present building, including the porch, is one hundred and sixty-five feet long, seventy-five feet wide, and has a not unattractive minaret. The

Tomb of John the Baptist is shown in the crypt, which is a small chamber hewn deeply in the rock. From this crypt we were permitted to look through holes into three empty tomb chambers, which are said to be the tombs of John the Baptist, of Obadiah and of Elisha. Near the church is an ancient reservoir which suggests the "Pool of Samaria" where one washed the blood-stained chariot Ahab, in which, at last, the king had meet his doom. To the north of the church are the ruins of a large building, at the corners of which were strong square towers. The building was either the residence of the bishop or of the Knights of St. John.

In and among the houses of the modern village are scattered many fragments of ancient buildings, such as hewn blocks, shafts of columns, capitals, and portions of entablatures. The natives are of the most fanatical and impudent, and are the most dangerous looking of any we met in Palestine, unless we might except those of Hebron. They were very persistent in offering coins and other relics for sale; but it was necessary for a number of persons to keep together and then not to allow the natives to come too near, to prevent being robbed or having their pockets picked. Above the village is a large artificially levelled terrace which is now used for a threshing-floor. It was here, on mats spread on the ground, we had our lunch at noon, and rested ourselves and

our horses. To the west of this, near by in an olive orchard, stand upward of a dozen high columns. They form an oblong quadrangle, and are generally believed to mark the site of the magnificent temple which Herod is said to have erected in honor of Augustus "on a large open space in the middle of the city." On the southwest, a little below the crest of the hill, the thick foundation walls of a good sized building are seen. In the interior are four columns. The building may be part of a fortress or a watch tower. To the northeast, at the base of the hill, where it forms a bay, are further numerous columns, thought to be the ruins of a hippodrome, which must have been not less than fourteen hundred feet long and one hundred and eighty feet wide. It is said, however, that they may possibly have belonged to a second colonnade which diverged at an angle from the one we mentioned first.

## CHAPTER IX.

### SHECHEM AND THE SAMARITANS.

ONE OF THE most ancient as well as most interesting places in all Palestine is Nablous, better known to us by its Bible name, Shechem. Here we came and camped for the night, after a short ride of two hours from Samaria. The name Nablous means Neapolis, or New City, so called from the circumstance of its having been rebuilt or restored in Roman times. It was also sometimes called Mamortha or Mabortha, which signifies "pass," or "place of passage," from its location in the pass or valley between the two hills Ebal and Gerizim.

By some convulsion of nature the central ridge of mountains running north and south has been cleft open here at right angles, forming a deep valley running east and west, now known as the Vale of Nablous. This valley is itself at least eighteen hundred feet above the level of the sea. The mountains on each side tower to an elevation of about one thousand feet, or, to be exact, Mt. Gerizim is two thousand eight hundred and forty-nine feet above sea level and nine hundred and sixty-nine feet

above Nablous, while Mt. Ebal is three thousand seventy-seven feet above sea level and one thousand two hundred and seven above Nablous. Ebal is on the north, Gerizim on the south, and the city between. Near the eastern end there is a place where the valley is not over one thousand feet wide, with concave places on the sides of the mountains forming a sort of natural amphitheatre. It is here, it is believed, the tribes assembled to hear the reading of the law, as recorded in Deuteronomy, chapters twenty-seven and twenty-eight. From Gerizim the blessings of obedience were pronounced and from Ebal the curses of disobedience thundered, while all the hosts of Israel in the valley below listened and were admonished.

Another striking feature of the location of Nablous is that it lies at the "summit" of the valley, the city being exactly on the height of the water-shed. Within the limits of the town there are over twenty copious springs. From some of these the water flows east into the Jordan and from others west into the Mediterranean. These streams, clear and cool and copious, render the environs beautifully green and fertile. As some one has truly said, "There is certainly no spot in central Palestine which rivals this narrow valley in rich verdure, luxuriant vegetation, and luscious fruitage. It calls forth the admiration of travellers from every clime, and may be

regarded as a typical representative of the natural beauty and extraordinary productiveness of 'the good land' when in its best estate."

We well remember our coming down into this valley on our way south from Samaria. It was at a point about three miles west of Nablous. The city was in plain sight ahead of us, but quite up at the valley's highest point. On one side or the other all the way up, fine streams were flowing swiftly by and everywhere aqueducts or small canals were seen, the water being so manipulated that practically all the available ground was irrigated, and the crops were growing finely. Every here and there was a dam and by it a mill. The whole region was in marked contrast to what we had seen, both in the abundance of vegetation and in the evident enterprise and industry of the people. The Vale of Shechem is certainly one of the "beauty spots" of Palestine. It is the place, say the Moslem possessors, "beloved by Allah above all other places," and "his blessing rests upon it." Though on account of their bigotry, fierceness and dishonesty we fear they are mistaken about Allah's pleasure in them.

Nablous is one of the few places of the East that seem to have felt the touch of the business life of the modern world. It is still far below the standard of even the smallest American city, but it does seem as if its rushing streams had communicated to the

people a little of their own rapid movement. At least, they have set the wheels of industry in motion. Besides the oil presses which receive the abundant yield of the orchards and turn it into oil, there are some fifteen or twenty factories engaged in turning the oil into soap, which has become a large article of export to Joppa and Beirut and other ports of the Mediterranean. Shechem also carries on considerable trade with the country east of the Jordan, particularly in wool and cotton. It was really refreshing after passing through so many places that seemed more dead than alive, to come to one town that showed some sign of enterprise, in this sleepy old country.

A site so fair and lovely invited by its many waters the earliest settlement of mankind. As old as Damascus and Hebron, Shechem was undoubtedly a city of some importance while Abram was still living in Chaldea. For it was to the outskirts of this place he came, more than forty centuries ago, with his flocks and his herds, when God called him unto Canaan. Here, then known as Sichem, was his first halting place after he had passed over the Jordan and entered the Promised Land; here he built his first altar, and here "the Lord appeared unto him." The record is, "And Abram passed through the land into the place of Sichem, unto the plain (or oak) of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in



the land. And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him."

While the eastern end of the Vale of Shechem opens out into what is now called the Plain of Moreh it is a striking fact that the word here in Genesis translated "plain" is in fact "oak." It is so corrected in the Revised Version. It is a curious fact also that the oak thus mentioned appears also in the account of Jacob's residence here two generations later, for Jacob was Abraham's grandson. It is stated that Jacob "hid all the strange gods" that were in his family "under the oak which was by Shechem." Yet, again, in the time of Joshua, this oak seems to be mentioned, at the time he made his farewell covenant with Israel at Shechem. It is said: "And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God, and took a great stone, and set it up there under an oak, that was by the sanctuary of the Lord."

The present city contains about twenty-four thousand inhabitants including one hundred and seventy Samaritans—the only remaining remnant of that people—a few Jews, about seven hundred Christians, mostly members of the orthodox Greek Church, a few Roman Catholics and about one hundred and fifty Protestants. The place is the



seat of a subordinate Turkish governorship and has a garrison accommodating a regiment of infantry. It is the seat also of a bishopric of the orthodox Greek Church. It has eight large Mohammedan Mosques, two so-called colleges, one for girls and one for boys, and a number of lower grade schools called Koran Schools. It is also a station of the English Church Missionary Society, which maintains here a church, a school and a hospital. There is also a Roman Catholic Church with mission house attached and the united and Orthodox Greeks each have a church. One of the Mohammedan Mosques, called the Great Mosque, bears quite a remarkable resemblance to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. It is believed to have been originally a church built by the Christian Emperor Justinian. Another interesting mosque is called The Mosque of Victory, or more popularly "The Green Mosque." It also was probably a Crusaders' church. We are told it is on the spot where Jacob stood when his guilty sons brought Joseph's blood-stained coat and showed it to him. By the side of the church rises a peculiar sort of clock-tower and on it is a Samaritan inscription. The Samaritans say that they once possessed a synagogue here. In the northeast corner of the town is a mosque called "The Mosque of the Lepers," being attended exclusively by the lepers who have a home in the buildings about it.

It is believed that this Mosque too was erected by the Crusaders as a hospital for the Templars. A little further to the north we were shown what Muslim tradition declares to be the Tomb of Jacob's sons, with a nearly new mosque beside it.

But, as we have already intimated, the main interest of the present city clusters about the small remnant of the ancient Samaritans who reside here. There are many small religious communities in the world, but we hardly think there can be another so small which is at the same time so old. As we have said, all told there are but one hundred and seventy souls, all of whom live in Nablous; but their history goes back to the time of Christ and even beyond, to the captivity of the ten tribes. After the northern kingdom had been carried to the east by the Assyrians, foreign colonists were imported by the king of Assyria, from Babylon and many other places in the empire. By intermarriage with these and the remnant of the Jews the population acquired a mixed character. The Jews, as we know, have always been jealous of the purity of their racial blood. The captivity in Babylon, among the strange and heathen people, had, if possible, intensified this feeling of exclusiveness. On their return from Babylon they were much scandalized at finding that their brethren had yielded to the seduction of the foreigners, and had married among them indiscrimi-

nately. It was this, born of the spirit of jealous reserve, which prompted the Jews to refuse the proffered aid of the Samaritans in building the walls of Jerusalem and of the temple. Finding that the Jews had excluded them from all participation in their worship they founded a holy city of their own, and a sanctuary of their own. Shechem was the holy city and the temple was built on Mount Gerizim. There was a standing quarrel between the Jews and the Samaritans, sometimes even breaking out in warfare and bloodshed, from that time on. Even in the time of Christ, as we know, "the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans," even regarding their name as a term of reproach. Because they adhered so firmly to their religion they later came into conflict with Christianity, under the Roman Empire, and because of repeated insurrections many of them were martyred. Some embraced Christianity, and others were scattered into distant regions. In the twelfth century over one thousand of them were living at Shechem, and there were also colonies of them at Ashkelon, Cæsarea and Damascus. Later there were small communities of them also at Cairo and Gaza. Their number is steadily diminishing and for some years past they have been found only at Shechem. The small remnant numbers less than two hundred. Here they live, in a distinct quarter of the city, a peculiar people, and preserving

to a marked degree the venerable type of Jewish physiognomy.

The streets of Shechem, especially in the Samaritan quarter, are so narrow that the houses usually are joined above and then the streets become a tunnel with an occasional shaft overhead to admit a ray of light and a little air. Through these crooked streets we made our way to their synagogue. On our way, in a bare room, we saw a school, where the boys were studying the Samaritan dialect of the Hebrew. They must have been studying very hard, for they were all doing it almost at the top of their voices. Reaching the synagogue the rabbi, who is a very venerable and fine appearing man, received us cordially. Putting slippers on our feet, to show due reverence, we entered the main room of the synagogue, which, small as it is, is too small to contain all the people of the congregation. The thick-walled building has a small dome, a kind of altar or holy place, and is so constructed that during worship the congregation faces Mount Gerizim. The rabbi claims to be a high priest of the tribe of Levi, and signed himself on photographs of himself holding the Samaritan Pentateuch, which he sold us, as "Jacob, son of Aaron, Chief Priest."

As is well known, the Samaritans accept only the five books of Moses as their Bible, but the teaching of the Law they observe with scrupulous care, and



A SAMARITAN PRIEST.



their own priceless treasure is a copy of the Samaritan version of the Pentateuch, which they claim was written by Abishua, the son of Phineas, the son of Eleazer, the son Aaron. It is astonishing to find that it is written in the "round" Hebrew character, which was in use before the days of Ezra. Scholars believe that it is a copy of older manuscripts which was made about the fourth century after Christ. They hold it in high reverence. When we offered to touch it the rabbi gently forbade us; but small imitations of it were offered us in tin cases at prices varying from twenty-five cents to one dollar. The copy they show is in a remarkable silver case, the outside of which is figured with a representation of the tabernacle of Moses, the ark, the cherubim, the rods of Moses and Aaron, the altars for burnt offerings and for incense, the seven-branched candlestick, and, in short, all the tabernacle furniture.

They observe seven feasts in the year; though only one, the passover, is observed with its former solemnities. The Sabbath is kept by them with great strictness. The years of jubilee and release are also observed. The high priest may consecrate any of his family to the priesthood provided he is over twenty-five years old and has never had his hair cut. They wear white turbans, or, for the sake of keeping peace with the Mohammedans, more often of pale-red color. The women must let their hair



grow, and wear no ear-rings, because of them the golden calf was made. When a boy is born there is great rejoicing, and his circumcision always takes place on the eighth day after his birth. Boys marry as early as fifteen or sixteen years of age and girls at twelve, and Samaritans may marry Christian or Jewish girls provided they will become Samaritans.

As we said, their most important annual observance is the feast of the Passover, which they keep more nearly according to the directions in Exodus than do the Jews themselves. For this they are encamped in booths or tents on Mount Gerizim. Lambs one year old are selected, and, as the sun goes down, are slain and placed over the fire. The blood is caught and sprinkled over the sides and tops of the doors. About midnight, when the lambs are roasted, they are eaten with bitter herbs and unleavened bread, and in great haste. Any parts remaining are burned with fire.

The Samaritan population is a strong corroborative argument for the truth of the Bible. Their copy of the Pentateuch agrees in all essential respects with the Hebrew Bibles from which our English versions are translated. In some particulars it closely agrees with the Septuagint, the Greek translation made in Egypt in the third century before Christ. The course of their history, too, is quite clear back as far as the building of the second temple,



about 536 B. C. One cannot but pity this vanishing remnant of an historic people. Their reverence for their fragment of Scripture is touching, pathetic, inspiring. It points them to the Star which should arise out of Jacob; but when the Star arose, when Christ came among them in person, most of them failed to recognize who he was. Their day seems nearly done, their entire disappearance as a community only a matter of a comparatively short time.

## CHAPTER X.

### SYCHAR AND JACOB'S WELL.

**A**FTER A NIGHT not a little disturbed by the screeching of jackals outside our tents, we resumed our journey from Shechem toward Jerusalem. We had camped just east of the city. Passing between Ebal and Gerazim, within a few minutes, the distance being a little over a mile, we came to the village of Balata. This name, Balata, is from the word ballut, meaning oak. It was here, according to early Christian tradition and the Samaritan chronicle, stood the oak of Shechem, or the oak of Moreh, where Abram first tarried in Canaan and where he built an altar, where Jacob hid the idols of his family, and where Joshua set up a memorial stone when he took the parting covenant from Israel.

On the way we had passed the famous spring Ain Defna, with a large Turkish barracks, an arsenal and a hospital near by.

The village of Balata lies at the foot of Mt. Gerazim at the point where the narrow Vale of Shechem begins to widen out into the Plain of Moreh, or, as it is now called, the plain of El Mukhnah. Just

opposite Balata, across the narrow valley, at the eastern base of Mt. Ebal, lies the Sychar of New Testament times, now known as Askar.

It is just here, at the eastern opening of the Vale of Shechem, almost between Balata and Askar, but a little east of Balata, lies two of the most interesting places to be visited in all Palestine, Jacob's Well and Joseph's Tomb.

The well is just off the road on the left side as you journey east, after passing Balata, and Joseph's Tomb is in plain sight near by on the road which runs north past Askar, or Sychar.

Sychar is not, as was so long supposed, another form of the name for Shechem. It is made plain from the speech of Stephen, recorded in the Acts, that Shechem was known in the time of Christ under its own proper name. Not only so, but this place is much better suited to the narrative concerning Christ and the Samaritan woman than is Shechem, for it is scarcely half a mile from Jacob's Well, whereas Shechem is a mile and a half away. This is rather far for the woman to have come out after water—though it is not necessary to assume she came for it from the city, as it is more likely she was working in the vicinity and came to the well from the place where she was. But that the present Askar is the ancient Sychar is made all the more probable from the statement in John's account of Christ's talk with

the Samaritan woman, when he says plainly that the city was "near the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph." As we have said, Joseph's Tomb is near by where Christ and the woman were, and Sychar also is near by. The account also agrees well with the circumstances that the woman ran into the city and soon returned followed by the people.

As we have intimated, few places that we visited awakened deeper emotions or made a stronger impression on our minds than Jacob's Well. To think that our eyes were privileged to look upon the very spot where Jesus sat and talked with the woman of Samaria! For of all the places where Jesus walked or talked this is the most reliably identified. We may not know the house in Nazareth in which he lived. No one can point out the precise spot in the Garden of Gethsemane where he poured out his soul in prayer and sorrow. Just where was the home in Bethany in which he so often rested, or where was the garden which witnessed his resurrection, or from which cone of Olivet he ascended into heaven, no one with certainty can tell; but we do know that here, weary, dust-covered and thirsty, "He sat thus on the well," while his disciples passed on to the city to purchase food. And here, to a lone woman of Samaria, undoubtedly a questionable character, in a tactful and most beautiful manner he preached one of the most meaningful discourses that ever was

uttered. In what a delicate and wonderful way he unfolded to the woman her life of sin, the freeness and thirst-satisfying qualities of the Gospel, and led her to believe in himself as the promised Messiah. So interested he became that he forgot his thirst; and so joyous of heart the believing woman became that she forgot her water-jar, and leaving it at the well hastened away to the city to publish the good news that had come to her own soul.

O Wonderful Teacher! Deep was our emotion as we sat thus on the well and thought of this marvelous story and of him who was the source of it.

Out of this little wayside incident at the well—the mere request for a drink of water—grew this beautiful account, this wonderful discourse of Jesus, and the thronging multitudes inquiring the way of salvation, whose eager, upturned faces suggested to him the comparison of the whitened field ready for the spiritual harvest.

Instead of resting for a brief half hour on the well, Jesus abode for two whole days in the city of the seeking multitudes. To be sure, the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans, but when the Samaritans asked for salvation Jesus delayed his going into Galilee to comply with the request and plant there the seeds of the kingdom of grace.

The reader will doubtless wish a description of the well itself, as it appears to-day. There is a

ruined chapel or crypt which has protected the mouth of the well from the drifts of earth and disintegrated rock that has been forming about it for ages. This crypt is the successor of another structure which dated back to the fourth century. The well belongs to the Greek Church and is now, together with quite a space of ground about it, enclosed by a high stone wall, and a small fee is charged for entrance.

For many years the visible opening of the well was in the floor of the subterranean chapel and could only be reached by a descent of eight or ten feet through its vaulted roof. Since the discovery of the real mouth of the well, under the floor of the chapel, by Dr. C. A. Barclay, in 1881, the rubbish has been cleared away, and access to it has been made easy from the level of the ground outside.

The account of his remarkable and most important discovery was given by Dr. Barclay in a letter to the officers of the Palestine Exploration Fund. The letter is so interesting that we take the liberty of quoting from it at considerable length. He said:

“Jacob’s well has again and again been described by writers on Palestine, and all have mentioned their disappointment that instead of finding any resemblance to a well, or anything which would recall the interview of our Lord with the woman of Samaria, they have merely found a dark, irregular hole amid

a mass of ruins in a vaulted chamber beneath the surface of the ground. I have shared this disappointment on many previous visits to Nablous, and again, as a fortnight ago I stood with my wife beside the spot, it was with great regret that we were utterly unable to picture before us the scene so graphically described by the Evangelist. We had clambered down into the vault, and were vainly attempting to peer into the dark hole amid the heaps of stones and rubbish, when we chanced to notice, a few feet from the opening, a dark crack between the stones. Fancying that possibly it might be another opening of the well, we removed some stones and earth, and soon were able to trace part of a curved aperture in a large slab of stone. Deeply interested at finding this, we cleared away more earth and stones and soon distinguished the circular mouth of the well, though it was blocked by an immense mass of stone. Calling to aid two men who were looking on, with considerable labor we at length managed to remove it, and the opening of the well was clear. It is impossible to describe our feelings as we gazed down the open well, and sat on that ledge on which doubtless the Saviour rested, and felt with our fingers the grooves in the stone caused by the ropes by which the water-pots were drawn up. The following day we devoted to completely excavating round the opening of the well, and laying bare the massive stones

which form its mouth. This consists of the hard white limestone of the country, and is in fair preservation, though parts are broken away here and there."

He gives the exact measurements of the stone curb as follows,—length three feet nine inches, breadth two feet seven inches, thickness one foot six inches, height above pavement one foot one inch, breadth of aperture of the well, one foot five and a half inches. He adds: "We let a boy down to the bottom, but found nothing of any interest, but evidently there is a large accumulation of rubbish. I trust that a stone of such intense interest may long remain uninjured now that it has been exposed to light."

The well is lined with good sized stones, smoothly dressed and nicely fitted together, and is a perfect cylinder, seven feet six inches in diameter. Rev. Dr. Edward Robinson quotes an earlier explorer as stating that when visited by him it was one hundred and five feet deep and contained fifteen feet of water. Captain Anderson was the first explorer to descend it, which was in 1866. He was let down by a rope, the untwisting of which under the tension of his weight caused him to revolve so rapidly that he fainted on his way down. Upon returning to consciousness he found himself on his back in the dry bottom of the well. He said that on looking up





THE CURB OF JACOB'S WELL.



the opening at the top appeared to him like a star. He found an unbroken pitcher in the bottom, which must have fallen when there was water in the well, or it would have broken. He also found the depth to be seventy-five feet. He states that it had been filled up ten feet in the previous ten years. On our visit one of the members of the party let down a line and it measured sixty-six feet six inches, showing that the process of filling up, which is due to a custom long followed by all visitors, both native and foreign, of throwing in stones to hear them strike the bottom, had been steadily going on. We are glad to say this practice has been stopped by the present guardians of the well. We hope the well may ere long be cleaned out to the bottom. It was undoubtedly sunk to so great a depth for the purpose of securing, even in exceptionally dry seasons, a good supply of water.

## CHAPTER XI.

### JOSEPH'S TOMB AND SOUTHWARD TO SHILOH.

**J**UST A LITTLE distance away, as we have said, and in full view from Jacob's Well, is another relic of the past almost as interesting, namely Joseph's Tomb. It is on a slight elevation between Jacob's Well and Sychar, almost in the middle of the mouth of the valley, between the mountains of Ebal and Gerazim. It is a small, square, white building constructed of brick and plaster, and beyond a doubt marks the site of the ancient sepulchre. The location accords exactly with the Bible narrative and has for many centuries been held in reverence by Jews, Samaritans, Moslems and Christians.

When Joseph was about to die, amid all the splendor of the Egyptian court, his thoughts went back to the scenes of his boyhood and to the plot of ground his father had given him as a token of parental love. And desiring to be buried where his childhood days had been spent, and in faith that God would bring his people safely back, he took an oath of his brethren that when God should restore them to the land of their fathers, they would carry up his

bones with them. The pledge was remembered, and when the exodus took place, his embalmed body was taken by the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt and laid to rest in this same historic parcel of ground. Here, after the longest funeral procession history has ever recorded, were laid to rest the mortal remains of him who preferred an Egyptian prison to the pleasures of dishonor, and whom God advanced from the dungeon to the first place of power beside a Pharaoh on his throne.

The building as it stands to-day is composed of two apartments, the northern being a rounded vestibule, and the southern a roofless enclosure about twenty-five feet square, surrounded by a wall ten feet high. The tomb is in this latter enclosure and is constructed in the usual style of Mohammedan graves. It is about seven feet long, four feet wide at the base, and is raised in the shape of a grave-mound about three feet in height in the middle. At the head and foot are two pillars of black granite, each with an urn on top filled with ashes, the remains of votive offerings which the Jews burn from time to time. Small earthen lamps with oil in them are also deposited by devotees in an opening in one end of the tomb. The wall around it is a reconstruction made in 1868 by a Mr. Rogers, who was the British counsel at Damascus, and this fact is stated on a marble slab let into the wall.

As we have said, the probability that this is the real resting place of the bones of Joseph is very great. His mummy, when brought up out of Egypt by Joshua, was buried in the "parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem, for one hundred pieces of silver," and there is practically no doubt that this is that parcel of ground. To be sure, the tomb is of Mohammedan structure and comparatively modern; but the long period of time that has elapsed has made many reconstructions of the original tomb necessary, and this may be but the last of the series. The fact that it is not made to point toward Mecca is in strong opposition to any theory that it could be an invention of the Moslems. But for the superstition of the Mohammedans, who would resent with the utmost violence any attempt at excavations into the tomb, the question whether Joseph's mummy, or any part of it, is to be found there, could be settled in a few hours. Doubtless the day is coming when this will be done. It is not impossible that men may yet gaze upon the actual body of Joseph, here, and at Hebron, in a fully as jealously guarded grave, upon the face of his father Jacob. There is almost no limit to the wonders the jealously guarded sites of the Holy Land may yet reveal to the explorer, the excavator, and the student of Biblical Archeology.

From Jacob's Well and Joseph's Tomb our way

lay directly south. Shortly after leaving this general vicinity we passed by the village of Awerta. It is on a little knoll in the middle of the Plain of Moreh, about three miles south of Jacob's Well. Here were pointed out to us the reputed tombs of Eleazer and Phinehas, father and son, who were priests in the time of Joshua. Eleazer was son and Phinehas the grandson of Aaron. The account of Eleazer's burial is given in the book of Joshua: "And Eleazer, the son of Aaron died; and they buried him in a hill that pertained to Phinehas his son, which was given him in Mount Ephraim."

The tomb of Phinehas, which is a place of great resort to both Jews and Samaritans, stands in the centre of the village, enclosed in a little area or compound, with a small mosque near by. The tomb of Eleazer is just outside the village on a rise of ground. It is in a large enclosure which contains also a cave ascribed to Elijah. The grave is overshadowed by two very large terebinth trees, and is in a retired and truly beautiful location.

Going down the full length of the Plain of Moreh, or Plain of Mukhnah, which is one of the most beautiful, fertile and well-cultivated plains in Palestine, we by and by began to ascend by one of the narrowest, roughest and most dangerous roads we had to traverse in all our journeyings. From the top of the mountains at the southern extremity of

the valley we had one of the best views we had enjoyed. We could see snow-capped Hermon in the far north, the mountains of Moab, east of the Jordan, the Mediterranean on the west, and far beyond Jerusalem to the south. We crossed the ridge and descended by an even worse path down the other side. We all had to dismount and walk for fear of being thrown over the ledges to our death.

Passing along through the next valley, called Wady Aly, we soon passed El Lubban, which is the Lebonah of the Old Testament mentioned in Judges 21:19, in connection with Shiloh and the unique method the sons of Benjamin once used for securing wives, each catching one of the daughters of Shiloh as the women came out to dance. About five minutes further on we came to the ancient Khan El Lubban where there is a good spring and near by which we rested for two hours and had our mid-day lunch.

After the noon rest we resumed our journey going almost due east to Shiloh, or as it is now called, Seilum. How our hearts stirred within us as we rode along the barren rocky ledge to the ruins! The place is in utter desolation, or nearly so. The ruins of what must have been an old Crusader church is on the very summit of the hill. Several pillars and a stone with a pot of manna engraved



upon it yet remain to tell of its former greatness. As we looked upon the scene in the sunset glow we seemed to hear the voice of the stern old prophet Jeremiah saying: "But go ye now to my place which was in Shiloh, where I set my name at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel."

Shiloh is five miles north of Bethel and seventeen miles from Jerusalem. It was here that the tabernacle of the Lord, with the ark of the covenant, was placed after the conquest of Canaan, and here remained until after the end of the government of the Judges. It is said of Shiloh, Judges 21:19, that it was "in a place which is on the north side of Bethel, on the east side of the highway that goeth up from Bethel to Shechem, and on the south side of Lebonah." This is rather a vague description, but it answers in every particular to the present site as pointed out.

For many centuries Shiloh was the center of the Jewish national and religious life. The people gathered here just as they afterwards did to Jerusalem. Here, in honor of the Lord, a festival was annually celebrated on which occasion religious dances were performed by the daughters of Shiloh, on one of which occasions the sons of Benjamin secured themselves wives in the way we mentioned. This too was the residence of Eli, who judged

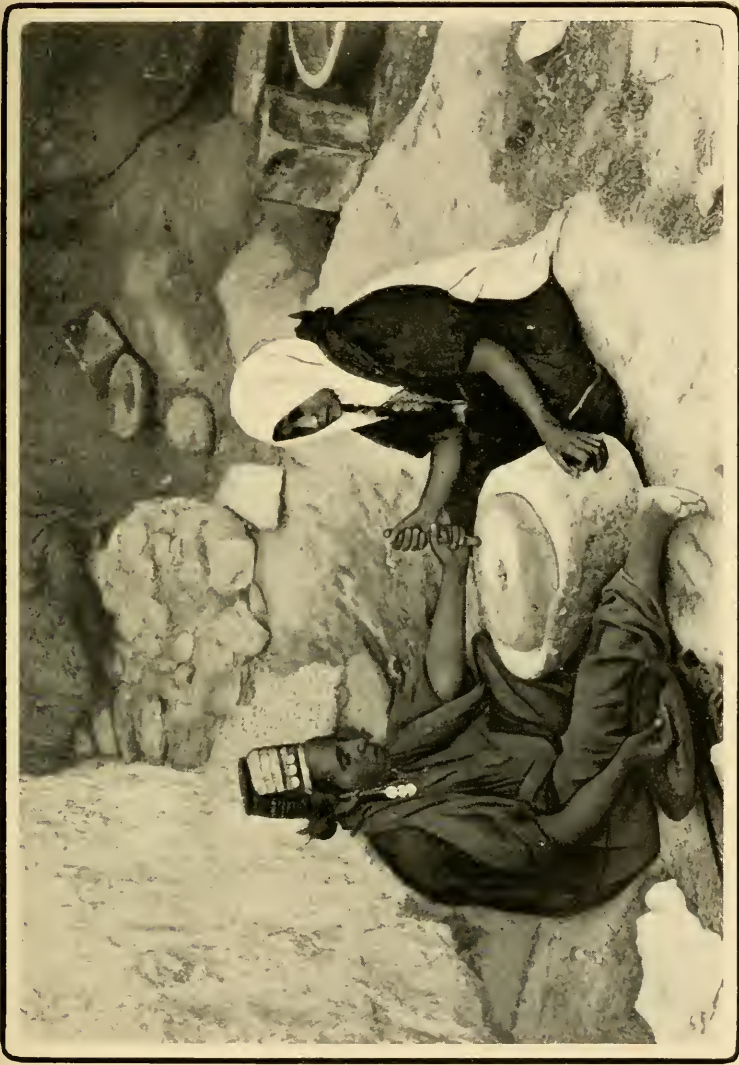
Israel here for nearly forty years, and, when nearly ninety years old fell dead when he heard of the ark of God being taken and of the death of his two sons, Hophni and Phinehas. While here we could not but think of this pathetic and touching incident, and also of Hannah, the mother of Samuel—how she consecrated her child from his birth, of her song of thanksgiving for the gift of a son, how she brought the child Samuel here and left him with Eli, and how he ministered before the Lord when only a child, girded with a linen ephod, how the word of the Lord came to him when he was laid down to sleep even before he knew it was the voice of the Lord, and how touchingly he replied when he knew who it was that called him. What a beautiful lesson the blameless life of the prophet Samuel furnishes us of the value of early piety and consecration. And what a touching picture of motherly love and devotion we have in the life of Hannah. Samuel had a noble mother, and Hannah had a son in every way worthy of her sacrifice and self-denial. Oh, that our own beloved land were filled with Hannahs, for then would we have more Samuels.

One of the ruins, lying a little distance from the road, is called Jami El Arbain, or The Forty Companions of the Prophet. The edifice was erected at various periods. The lintel of the portal, at the

north, is formed of a monolith with beautiful antique sculptures. The main building was only about thirty-three feet square. The roof was supported by four columns. During a restoration vaults were built and the side walls buttressed. A small mosque has been added on the east side. The road from the village leads past a large pond partially hewn out of the rock. In the hillside are rock-tombs. On the south side of the hill, quite a little below the summit, is a small flat-topped building, with a flight of outside steps ascending to the roof. It is called the mosque Jami El Yetem. It is said to have been used formerly as a chapel, and also as a synagogue, though it is rather small for either, being only thirty-seven feet square. A magnificent oak overtops it. The interior of the mosque is vaulted and supported by two columns.

But that which to many minds gives the chief interest to the locality is a space artificially leveled on the northern brow of the eminence, just back of the ruins of the village, on which it is believed the tabernacle stood during its long continuance in Shiloh. The space is four hundred feet long from east to west, as far as the width of the hill will allow, and seventy-seven feet wide. It is made by cutting down the rock along the swell of the hill to the level of the two ends of the area. In doing this the natural rock was left from two to six feet high

on each side for quite a distance, but further on the upper side than the lower. It is entirely certain that this cutting was made in order to secure a level place for some purpose, and the dimensions of the space, just two feet wider than the tabernacle court, and long enough to leave a level space in front for the assembling of worshipers and sacrificial victims is thought to indicate unmistakably that it was intended to accommodate the tabernacle. One thing is sure, that there is no other spot identified on which the tabernacle could have stood. There is the added fact that this place is exactly the right size. That any such place could be recognized at all after a lapse of over three thousand years is certainly very remarkable; but this is due to the fact that it is cut in the solid rock of the hill's very top, where no earth could collect upon it to conceal it, and where no buildings were afterwards placed to cause it to be covered with ruins.



"WOMEN GRINDING AT THE MILL."



## CHAPTER XII.

### FROM SHILOH TO BETHEL.

**A**FTER OUR STAY at Shiloh, in the cool of the evening we made the short journey of two miles to Turmus Aya, where we camped for the night, our last night out from Jerusalem. Two photographers of Jerusalem having heard of our coming, seemed to think the matter of sufficient importance to come out the twenty miles or more to take photographs of our party and camp, and the quarrel between them was quite bitter as to which should have the exclusive privilege, which seemed to be in the hands of our chief dragoman.

Our camp was very near the small village, which occupies a knoll rising from the level valley. We visited the shekh of the village and also had the privilege of entering several homes. This was only a privilege because it afforded opportunity to see how the people live; for their thick-walled stone-and-mud houses seem inside more like low caves or holes in the ground. In a little oven-shaped cave at the side of the doorway of each house we saw little piles of fuel, dried grass and twigs, and what



is more common, sun dried cakes of manure. As is a common practice in all Palestine, and which we saw everywhere, the women gather the manure from field or stable and form it into cakes and place these on the roofs of the houses to dry. When hard and dry the cakes are stored in the houses, as is sometimes the case, or more often in an oven-like shelter near the doorway. Bear in mind, the people in Palestine keep practically everything they own in their homes or in an enclosure about them, where they are always under their eyes. And they have good reason to do so, for they well know if they did otherwise not one of their possessions would escape being stolen. The little bag of barley or wheat is kept carefully in an inside corner, near by which we saw in several houses the little stone mills at which two women grind the grain. These mills, just as in Bible times, are each formed of two flat round stones which rub on one another. A wooden peg is inserted in a hole in one edge of the upper stone, and one woman with it as a handle pushes the stone half way round and then the other makes it complete the circle, and this slow and laborious process is kept up until enough grain for a meal or two is ground. The bread is usually baked on hot coals in an oven, the loaves being in reality flat cakes quite thin and about six inches in diameter. The poorer peasants never think of such a thing as



sitting down to a table and the family eating the meal together. You will see them going out to the fields to work in the early morning, with an earthen bottle of water on their backs or tied to the harness of the donkey, and a cake of bread in their hands, eating their breakfast as they go. At noon they sit down flat in the furrow or field and have their dinner in the same way, while the donkey or ox, or both, seem mostly to browse among the stubble for a living, though we believe they do sometimes give them some grain. The peasants as we see them in the country districts universally, men, women and children, go bare-footed and bare-legged, and their wardrobe is of the scantiest possible in keeping with their being presentable at all.

After a good supper and a good night's rest, we broke camp for the last time in the morning. It was not without some feeling of regret. We had had not a drop of rain during the whole journey, and though the roads—we call them roads, but they were in reality like cow paths among the rocks—were rough, yet the ground everywhere had been bedecked with flowers, the air had been clear, our horses had proven enduring and generally reliable, and all our dragomen and attendants honest, obliging and faithful, and we had been passing through a land that every step of the way had been laden with wonderful memories and most sacred associations. The whole

experience had been somewhat like such a season of spiritual exaltation, or such mountain-top vision as blesses a Christian only once or at best only a few times in life. Besides our associations with one another had been very delightful. All in the party, we believe, were Christians, and we had had songs and services and testimonies together. Now we were about to break up the party and be merged and somewhat lost in the larger associations of the over eight hundred members of the cruise.

But a new feeling was beginning to take hold of us all. We were approaching Jerusalem! To-day we shall see the Holy City! It is hard to describe the feelings and the enthusiasm for pressing rapidly forward that came to all, awakened by this thought.

Early in the morning we were on our way. But there were interesting places yet to visit along the route, and many others almost as interesting to come under the field of our vision. The first was Bethel. What a privilege to be there! The very name means the house of God, and how full it is of patriarchal memories! It is the spot where Abraham, when a wanderer "journeying toward the south," "pitched his tent," and "builded an altar unto the Lord," (Gen. 12:8), and to which Jacob, a lonely, weary fugitive from his brother Esau's wrath, came and laid down to sleep. There in that nameless spot, on shelterless couch, and with comfortless

pillow he slept a restless slumber. While he slept his heart was awake, for he dreamed. He dreamed of his own sins and of a way back into communion with God. For this is the meaning of the ladder symbol. It is the Gospel in the Old Testament telling of a way of communication between heaven and earth, with the thoughts of man ascending up to God and the angels of God's mercy and love descending with messages and all spiritual and other blessings for him.

It may be easy to make light of these sacred associations and especially when we see such hallowed places desecrated by a wretched village and a miserable population. But to a devout mind whose thoughts are far away on times long gone, there is inspiration in the thought that this very ground has been touched by angels' feet, and that here the hardy patriarch chose one of the stones, like the many that lie about our feet, and, resting his head upon it, fell asleep and to his closed eyes but waking soul there came that heavenly vision.

We are sure that there was not one in all our party who did not in some degree share in the blessings of that vision of Jacob's, as we were permitted to visit a place where heaven had come so near to earth; and the reader will not be surprised that we fell into the mood of Mrs. Sarah Flower Adams' ever precious hymn and without a word of sug-

gestion sang together "Nearer, my God, to Thee."  
Who can say that Jacob's vision did not become ours  
as we softly chanted the words,

"Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
Nearer to Thee!  
E'en though it be a cross  
That raiseth me;  
Still all my song shall be,  
Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
Nearer to Thee!

Though like a wanderer,  
The sun gone down,  
Darkness be over me,  
My rest a stone;  
Yet in my dreams I'd be  
Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
Nearer to Thee!

There let the way appear,  
Steps unto heaven:  
All that Thou sendest me,  
In mercy given;  
Angels to beckon me  
Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
Nearer to Thee!

Then, with my waking thoughts  
Bright with Thy praise,  
Out of my stony griefs  
Bethel I'll raise;  
So by my woes to be  
Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
Nearer to Thee!"

We doubt not that this hymn is sung by nearly  
every caravan of pilgrims from Christian lands when  
in making the tour of Palestine they camp at Bethel.  
Is it not a sweet immortality for this Christian

poetess that her song should thus linger about the Holy Land, the stories of which were so dear to her, and continue to interpret the worshipful thoughts of Christian travellers long after she had ceased to sing on earth?

We do not wonder that our martyred president, and so many before him and since, loved and do love this beautiful hymn. But we shall ever count it a high privilege that so many of us were permitted to sing it together there on the sacred site of Bethel itself.

Bethel, or rather the ruins of it, stands on the summit of a rocky ledge, nearly twelve miles north of Jerusalem. On our way from Turmus Aya we had passed in sight of the village of Sinjil which received its name from Count Raymond of Toulouse, during the first Crusade, and also, a short distance further south, that famous location known as the Robber's Fountain. This is a cool and inviting retreat in the valley. From the base of a perpendicular ledge there issues several small perennial springs of good water, and on a smooth plot of ground between the cliff and the torrent-bed which drains the valley is the much frequented camping place known by the not very inviting title, the Robber's Fountain. It is the half-way station for pilgrims between Jerusalem and Shechem. Near by are several caves that would afford convenient hid-

ing places for those with evil designs, and the place evidently derived its name from tradition connecting it with the depredations of robbers. Modern guides and dragomen take advantage of this to regale their companies of tourists with tales of adventure and hair-breadth escapes. It is one of the wildest and most picturesque spots along the way, with vines and ferns clinging to the precipitous sides of the hills which enclose it, while the shadows which fall upon the narrow space between are very grateful to the traveller who has reached it through long stretches of exposure to the Syrian sun. But we refuse to believe that there is any evil omen connected with the place or that those who camp there are any less safe than in other parts of Palestine.

In plain sight on the left, as one is facing south, is the high bare mountain, so prominent in Bible history, especially as a land-mark, known as Tell Asur, but in Bible times as Baal Hazor. It rises to an elevation of nearly four thousand feet, its southern base being the boundary line, as first established, between Ephraim and Benjamin. Its associations seem mostly to have been with Baal and his worship, though on the slope of it, as we are told in Second Samuel, thirteenth chapter, Absalom had a sheep farm to which his brother Amnon was treacherously decoyed and where he was put to death.

But we were describing Bethel. The place is now known as Beitin, and consists of a collection of miserable hovels occupying a southern slope near the summit of a very rocky hill. The present inhabitants are estimated at about four hundred, and they dwell in poor houses mostly built of material from the ruins of ancient and much better buildings. We were besieged here by beggars of the worst type. From the roof of the sheik's house we had a very extensive view, the outlines of Jerusalem and the buildings on the Mount of Olives being in plain sight. To the northwest we visited the ruins of a Crusaders' church, and at the foot of the hill a remarkable reservoir. It is now dry, but has a fine spring at one side enclosed in a circular basin. The reservoir, or artificial pond, is three hundred and fifteen feet long and two hundred and sixteen feet wide. The southern and eastern walls are still standing, the pool being partly cut in the solid rock and with the rock bottom exposed in a part of its area. The reservoir was evidently about twelve feet deep, and was certainly capable of containing an immense quantity of water.

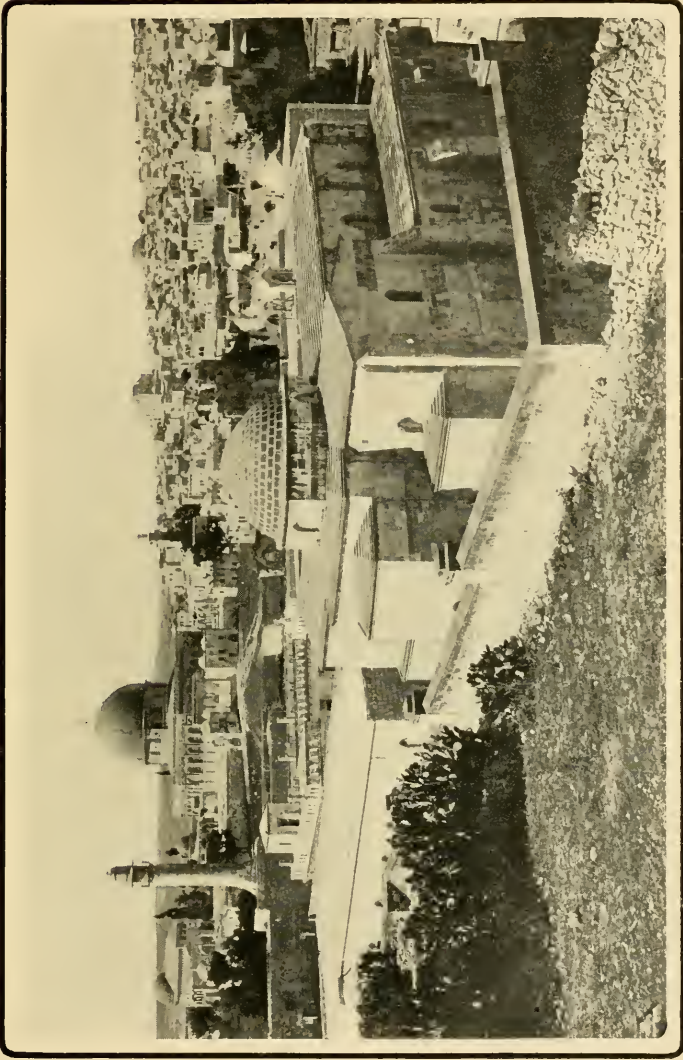
## CHAPTER XIII.

### FROM BETHEL TO JERUSALEM.

**F**ROM BETHEL we came, about a half an hour's ride further south, to El Bireh, the site of the ancient city of Beeroth. The name means the place of wells. There are several fine springs here, and for this reason it is a favorite halting place for caravans. The place contains about one thousand inhabitants, and has near by some interesting reservoirs and in the north part of the village a tower partly constructed of ancient materials. But especially interesting are the remains of an ancient Christian church and of a kahn or hospice, which tradition has connected with the first visit of the child Jesus to Jerusalem. This is the place, according to very ancient tradition, where Joseph and Mary, returning to Nazareth from Jerusalem, first discovered that Jesus was not in the company, and returned to the city, where, after much searching, they found him in the temple "sitting in the midst of the doctors."

Only a little over a mile west of Beeroth is the very interesting Christian village of Ramallah,





GENERAL VIEW OF JERUSALEM.



where are some excellent missions conducted by the English church, by the American Quakers,—the branch known as the New England Meeting of Friends—and by the Roman Catholics. There is a flourishing Protestant school here and also schools conducted by the Greek and Latin churches. One of the Protestant missionaries came over and took lunch with us and urged us very strongly to visit his station; but we were hot and tired, besides the fever for Jerusalem was upon us and we felt we could not delay.

Beerth is just ten miles from Jerusalem, and a good new carriage road now reaches out thus far. Many being weary with their long ride on horseback and preferring to take it easier the balance of the journey had ordered carriages to meet them here. Some in carriages and others on horseback, after the mid-day lunch, we took up the last short stage of the journey—ten miles to Jerusalem. Many points of interest along the way were in sight on either side. This entire hill country of Benjamin, through which we were passing, though extremely dry and rocky, is thickly set with villages, and the soil on the hillsides and in the valleys is rich and productive, the villagers finding a good market for all they can raise in Jerusalem. We passed in sight of Khirbet El Atara, a ruined village with two old ponds and some tombs, the Ataroth Adar of Joshua's

time. Not far away was Michmash on the left, with Geba a little way across a narrow valley, to the south. These places are familiar to every Bible student, the former as the camping place of Saul's army and the latter as the garrison of the Philistines. Just below, in the narrowest part of the village, are the two rocks, Seneh and Bozeh, made famous by the exploit of Jonathan and his armor-bearer. 1 Samuel 14:4, 5. Off on the opposite side of our way, to the right, lay Gibeah of Saul, his birthplace, home and the seat of his government during most of his reign, as also the scene of the pathetic story of Rizpah's maternal love and lonely watch over her dead sons. It is on an elevation higher than Jerusalem overlooking the country for miles around. It is easy to understand why Saul chose it for his residence and his court. A little further to the east, on another hill, less than a mile from Gibeah, is Anathoth, the birthplace of the prophet Jeremiah, a priestly city and dwelling place of prophets. Still nearer to us, we soon passed on our left the little village of El Ram, or Ramah, the high place of Benjamin so often mentioned in connection with the history of Samuel and the Kings. Off to the west we could see, the most conspicuous elevation on the plateau northwest of Jerusalem, Neby Samwil, the probable site of Mizpeh. Its modern name, Neby Samwil, means the tomb of Samuel. It was given to

it by the natives on the basis of a very ancient tradition which names this peak as the burial place of the prophet Samuel. To Mizpeh the people of Israel were assembled to take counsel together concerning the rebellion of the tribe of Benjamin, on another occasion to offer sacrifices and seek deliverance from the Philistines, and again, to ratify the selection of Saul as their first king. It was one of the points, also, where Samuel regularly judged Israel.

The last village we passed was Shafat, about two miles from Jerusalem. This is thought by many to be the Nob of the Old Testament, which was a Levitical city in Benjamin and one of the places where the tabernacle or ark of Jehovah was kept for a time during the days of its wanderings before a home was provided for it on Mount Zion. But the event for which Nob was most noted in the Scripture annals was a frightful massacre which occurred in the time of Saul. When David was fleeing from the wrath of the jealous Saul he came here, and, being ahungered, on meeting Ahimelech the priest he demanded food. It was then that the consecrated shew bread was given him, referred to by Christ in the twelfth chapter of Matthew. The sword of Goliath, which had been kept as a trophy here, was also given to David, who took it with him. The jealous Saul was fearfully enraged when he heard

that such favors had been shown to a man he hated as a rival, and nothing would appease him but the indiscriminate slaughter of all the inhabitants of Nob. When the king's executioners refused to perform the bloody deed he turned to Doeg, the spy, who had betrayed the unsuspecting Ahimelech, and said: "Turn thou and fall upon the priests." The record goes on to say, "And Doeg, the Edomite, turned, and he fell upon the priests, and slew on that day fourscore and five persons that did wear the linen ephod. And Nob, the city of the priests, smote he with the edge of the sword, both men and women, children and sucklings, and oxen, and asses, and sheep, with the edge of the sword." Abiathar, a son of Ahimelech, was the only one who escaped to tell the sad story. It seems that the city never again regained its ancient importance.

This, as we have said, was the last place we passed. We were now rapidly nearing the city of our dreams, Jerusalem. But what we wish we could make real to our readers is the sense of excitement that had taken hold of all in our large party. Though the city was not yet in sight we began to feel that we were drawing very near to it—the city of our hopes, the climax of our expectations, the Holy City, Jerusalem! Even the horses seemed to catch this spirit and pranced and neighed, and sometimes became almost unmanageable. Our own sure-footed animal

which had not stumbled even once in the roughest places, in the excitement of the rush tripped and fell at full length on the road and his rider barely escaped being under him. But soon the cavalcade reached the summit of Mount Scopus, when the whole city and its surroundings burst upon us in an instant. It is impossible to describe the feelings that took possession of us. Though more quiet and subdued, still we can compare it only with the intense excitement of the old crusading army that came over this same road and approached the city from the north. It is said though thinned by pestilence, privation and service on many a battle field, that when the Crusaders first gazed upon the city from this point, the warrior host knelt down as a single man, sobs bursting from their mailed bosoms and tears streaming down their rugged cheeks.

Jerusalem! Jerusalem! what thoughts came trooping through our minds as a little later, in order to lengthen our journey, we passed over the Mount of Olives, down the valley of the Kidron, by Gethsemane's garden, and then almost encircled the walls of the city in order to pass in at the Joppa gate. "Our feet shall stand within thy gates, Oh, Jerusalem. Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together, whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks

unto the name of the Lord. For there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem, they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, "Peace be within thee!"





THE ENTRANCE TO JERUSALEM BY JAFFA GATE.



## CHAPTER XIV.

### JERUSALEM, THE HOLY CITY.

**S**OME ONE has well said: "The value of a book lies not so much in what it *tells* as in that which it *suggests*." This is preëminently true of Jerusalem. As far as sightseeing goes there are certainly many other far better places to visit. Many matter-of-fact and unimaginative people are indeed sorely disappointed with the Jerusalem of to-day and, because of a certain strain upon their ancient faith, are sometimes even heard to wish that they had never gone. But this is because they made the mistake of only seeing and not letting what they saw prove its greatest value in what it might have served to suggest. What they saw was only an old city upon an elevation, some ancient-appearing walls, some narrow tortuous streets, often reeking with unmentionable filth and heavy with unsavory odors, a nondescript crowd of people of all nationalities, and a lot of so-called "sacred places" with but little but their names to commend them, and nothing about them to excite either wonder or admiration.

But certainly he is to be pitied whose vision and perception reach no further than this. For a mind familiar with Scripture suggestions, a heart tender with historical and Biblical pathos, and a nature generous with the leaven of poetic feeling and sentiment must feel a peculiar thrill as before him rises the Sacred City, Jerusalem, the Salem of Melchisedek, the Jebus of the Jebusites, the Capital of David the King, the Holy City of all believers, "beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth!" Yes, and better than all, it is the city in which Christ himself walked in human form and where he taught, and wrought, and over which he wept, and through the streets of which he went willingly to the Cross for our redemption. Therefore it is that it ceases to be chiefly what one sees that is of value when he visits the city, but largely and satisfyingly that which it recalls and so well serves to suggest. It is certainly a very great privilege to have one's feet stand within her gates and to feel forty centuries of history pressing upon the mind for recognition and review.

Now, how shall we describe this most wonderful city—a city through whose streets the feet of prophets, priests and kings, of apostles and martyrs, and of the Saviour of the world have passed? Every niche of it is interesting, for "like a stringed instrument every touch upon which brings forth some sweet and musical sound, it vibrates at every turn

with some suggestion or beautiful passage of the Word of God."

The city comes to notice very early in the history of God's people. When Abraham was returning from pursuing the confederate kings of the plain we see Melchizedek, king of Salem, meeting him with bread and wine and blessing him. This same Melchizedek was "a priest of the most high God." Later on, in the time of the Judges, it was known as Jebus. After the conquest of David the two names Jebus-Salem were combined in the one word Jerusalem, the slight change in form being doubtless made for the sake of euphony. More than once in the Bible it is called the Holy City, and even to-day the Arabs call it El Khuds, "the holy."

Under David and Solomon the city reached its greatest glory and wealth. But from their time on it has a strange and chequered history. Under David's grandson Rehoboam, it was captured by Shishak, king of Egypt, and robbed of its wealth. In the reign of Jehoshaphat it was restored to something like its former prosperity, but Jehoram, his son, lost it to the Philistines and Arabians and it was again plundered. Under Athaliah it became a shrine of abominable Baal worship, but was reformed by Jehoiada in the earlier days of the reign of Joash, though later Joash allowed it to relapse into idolatry, for which sin Hazael, king of Syria, was per-

mitted to come against it and was only prevented from destroying it by the gift of all its treasures. The city was again plundered under its next king, Amaziah. Then in the reign of Hezekiah, the reader will recall, how "the Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold" against it, and how it was saved by the death angel who slew the hosts in the night. After the death of Josiah it was entered by the Egyptians under Necho. But it was left for Nebuchadnezzar, by two awful visitations, to utterly destroy it and leave it a heap of ruins, while the people were carried away into captivity.

After fifty years of desolation the city was occupied by Zerubbabel, under the decree of Cyrus. Then followed a century of reproachful history until the city was rebuilt by Nehemiah, when it once more prospered and became the metropolis as well as the capital of the Jewish nation.

Other reverses followed in the next three hundred years, until under the Maccabean princes it regained a fair degree of prosperity.

This brings us down to the Roman period, when, in 65 B. C., it was besieged by Pompey. But Herod the Great beautified the city, erected many buildings and rebuilt the temple throughout. The city of Herod was the Jerusalem in which Christ taught and over which he wept and whose people cruelly crucified him on the cross.

But, alas, the bitter lessons of the past did not suffice and once more the sword must come. This time it was the most terrible in the annals of the city, if not in all the bloody annals of the most bloody wars. For this time it was Titus, with his Roman army, who utterly demolished the city, burning the beautiful temple and putting the people to the sword.

For fifty years it stood a barren waste, then it was made the site of a heathen city, with a heathen name, no Jew being permitted to enter its walls, and a temple to Jupiter occupying the sacred site on Mount Moriah. This continued till the time of Constantine, the first Christian Emperor, who restored the ancient name, and his mother, the good Helena, made a pilgrimage to it in A. D. 326. For the next three hundred years it was visited with fire and sword until in A. D. 637 it passed under the dominion of the Moslems, then ruled by the Caliph Omar, and, though often visited by persecution since, the city has gradually recovered until to-day it contains a population of something over sixty thousand,—seven thousand Moslems, forty-one thousand Jews, and thirteen thousand Christians.

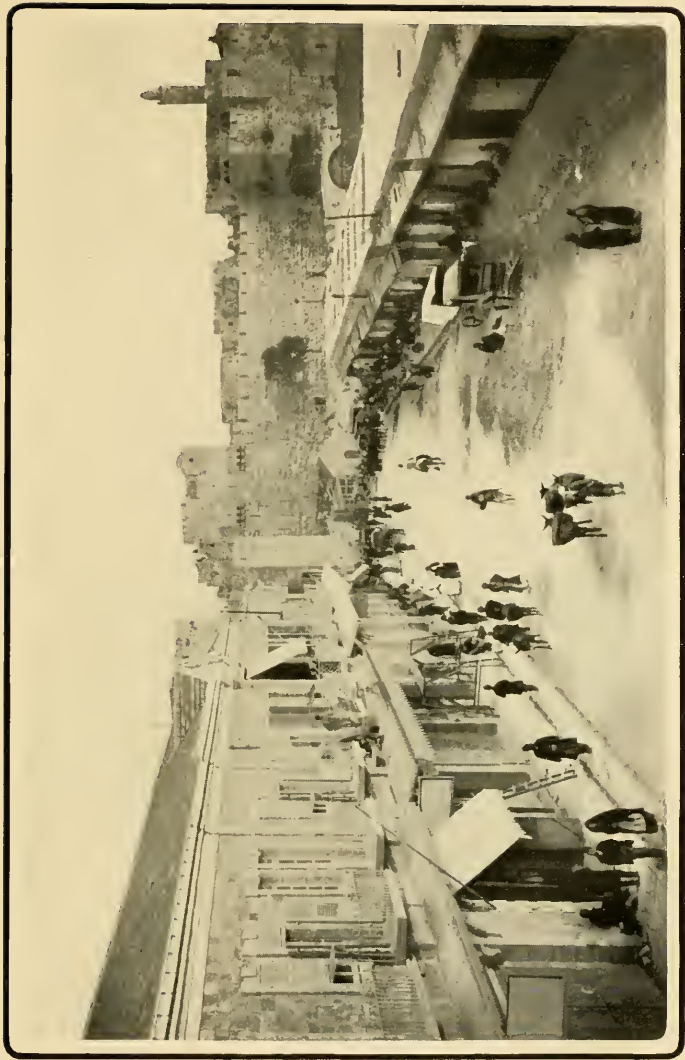
Thus have we given, in fewest possible words, the outlines of Jerusalem's history. It has sustained twenty-seven sieges, has three times been utterly destroyed, portions of it being literally plowed as a field,



and again and again have its streets been deluged with blood. It is estimated that the city of Solomon's time is from twenty to fifty feet under the present city. The Jerusalem of to-day is therefore literally, as prophesied by Jeremiah, "builded upon its own heap." Below its houses, courts and paved streets lie the rubbish and wreckage of not less than eight cities which have arisen in successive periods and are now piled one above another. The Holy City of the prophets, kings and apostles is a composite underground city, which can only be studied in a fragmentary way as the evidences of its former existence and greatness are laid bare with pick and spade. Indeed, as one of its best explorers says, reviewing thirty years of excavation and discovery: "If we examine it, we have to determine at every step among the ruins of which city we are standing. Solomon, Nehemiah, Herod, Hadrian, Constantine, Omar, Godfrey, Saladin, Suleiman—each in turn representing a city."

But with all its changes there is much of the Jerusalem of the past that still remains. The mighty framework of the everlasting hills on which it rested, the deep valleys which surround it, and the mountains which stand round about it—these are all there and the same in all their essential features as when David extolled the beauty of its situation or when Jesus beheld its later glories and wept over it and its sins and the doom that was so soon to come upon it.





DAVID STREET, JERUSALEM.



As in all the past, due to the necessities of its contracted situation, Jerusalem is a city that is "compactly built together." Its streets are narrow, its open courts few and limited in area, and its houses are massed in closest juxtaposition in the different quarters. Despite all the changes and transformations of recent years, and they are certainly very many, it still retains the appearance of a great fortress of the Middle Ages. But let us not forget that the city has a real beauty, peculiar to itself. Its massive gray walls, its broad-leaved gates and flanking towers, its mosques and churches and convents, its domes and minarets, rising conspicuously above the flat-roofed houses—these all present a picture of marvellous beauty and impressiveness, as we see them outlined in the clear sunshine from the top of Olivet or Mount Scopus.

The city has eleven gates, six of them open and five of them closed, and it is divided into four uneven sections by two of its principal streets, David Street and Damascus Street, which traverse the city almost at right angles. The southwest section is the Armenian quarter; the northwest, the Christian; the northeast, the Moslem; and the southeast, but not including the Temple Area, is the Jewish quarter. The Temple Area, known as the Haramesh Sheriff, or "Noble Sanctuary," is separated from the rest of the city by a high encircling wall of great

strength. This quadrangle enclosing nearly forty acres of ground, was once occupied by the great temple of Solomon and its court, and later by Herod's temple. It is now occupied by the Mosque of Omar, more properly called "The Dome of the Rock," and the Mosque El Aksa and the courts that surround them.

## CHAPTER XV.

### JERUSALEM, THE HOLY CITY.

(Continued.)

**A**MONG THE MOST interesting places to visit inside the city of Jerusalem are these: First, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, with its over thirty "sacred sites" and "holy places." It is one immense pile of edifices about three hundred and fifty feet long and two hundred and eighty wide, covering the traditional site of the crucifixion and burial of Christ. It is in reality a collection of churches, chapels and shrines grouped together under one widely-extended roof. The so-called Tomb of Christ is in a small marble edifice in the center of the rotunda beneath the dome. In another section of the church, on an elevation reached by a flight of twenty stone steps is shown the place of the crucifixion. While it is admitted that the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is the successor of the church built upon this site by Constantine in A. D. 325, and that it has been revered for more than fifteen centuries as the tomb of Christ, yet most of the leading

authorities at the present time have accepted the conclusion reached by Dr. Edward Robinson many years ago, "that its genuineness is supported neither by well authenticated historical facts, nor by prior traditions, nor by archeological features." Yet it is a fact that no other spot on earth has drawn together so many pilgrim bands from afar or has cost so much in blood and treasure. Its recovery from the hands of the Infidel was the dominant thought of all Europe for more than two hundred years, and it is estimated that the several crusades organized to accomplish this object cost from six to ten millions of human lives.

As we have said, besides the places of the cross and the tomb there are dozens of other sacred sites pointed out here, such as the stone of Unction, the spot where the Virgin Mary stood when the body of Christ was anointed, the stone on which the angel sat when He arose, the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, the altar of the penitent thief, the spot where the cross stood, the spots where the crosses of the thieves stood, the rent rock near the cross, the tomb of Adam, the tomb of Melchizedek, the chapel of Helena, the chair in which Helena sat when the cross was found, and so on and so on. Yet, we wish to record, after having visited these places and many more besides, that there is a certain impressiveness about every one of them, not because the

traditions concerning them are true, but because so many people think they are true, and because they have served to keep alive in the minds of the ignorant and superstitious the sacred influence of the life of our Lord, which most of them commemorate.

Next in importance we place the Mosque of Omar, or "The Dome of the Rock." Under the dome of the mosque lies a large irregular stone fifty-six feet by forty-two; and rising about five feet above the marble floor. If the platform were removed on which the whole building rests this ledge of rock would stand fifteen feet above the level of the temple area. It is the highest point of Mount Moriah, and is the place where Abraham built his altar, and where stood the Holy of Holies in both Solomon's and Herod's temple. The Moslems tell many marvellous stories concerning this rock, one of which is that when Mohammed made his celebrated flight to heaven and back he started from its surface, and it started to follow him, but the Angel Gabriel laid his hands on it and stopped it after it had risen to its present height above the surface. They show the marks of the angel's hands! Many other absurd things are told the travellers—all of which are not worth repeating.

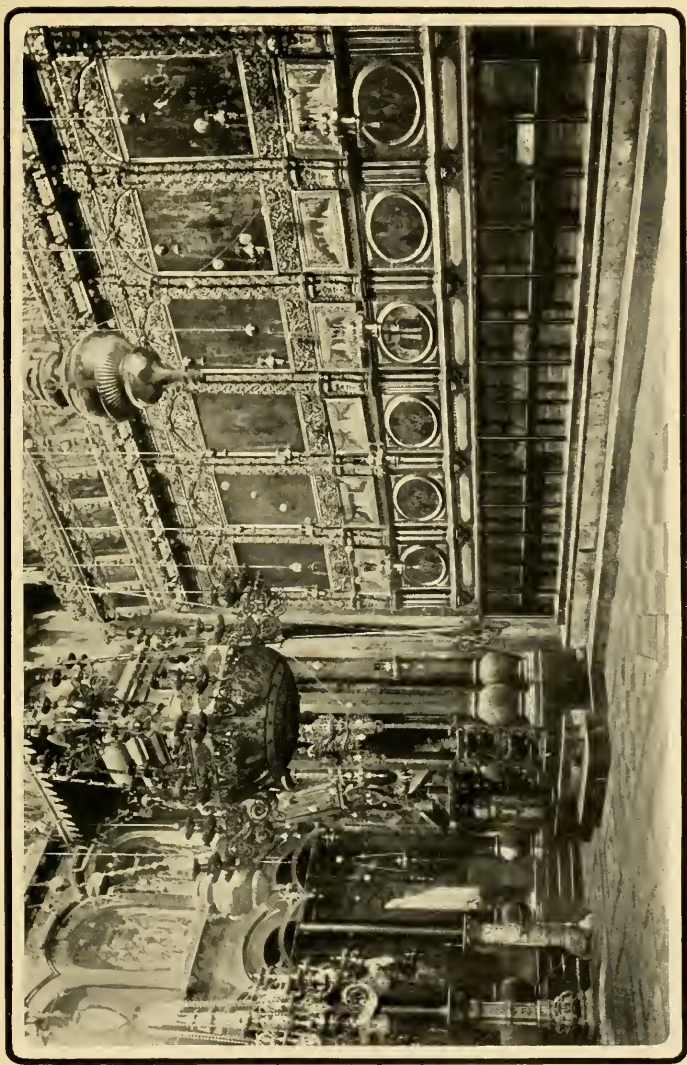
The mosque itself is certainly a very beautiful building, octagonal in form and sheathed with richly colored marbles and tiles and surmounted by an

exquisitely proportioned dome. As some one has truly said: "From whatever point that graceful dome with its beautiful precinct emerges to view, it at once dignifies the whole city." The interior, with its wonderful variety of architectural combinations and groupings, its rich decorations in stained glass, marble and mosaic, and its lavish profusion of gilt tracery and inscriptions, makes it indeed a sumptuous building well worthy of a visit for its own sake.

South of the platform, within the same temple enclosure, is the Great Mosque of El Aksa and its associated buildings. This pile extends to the outer wall of the Haram and covers a space two hundred and seventy-two feet by one hundred and eighty-four. The original structure was probably a Christian church built by the Emperor Justinian. "Taking it in mass and detail," says Hepworth Dixon, "this group of the Temple Hill—the Mosque of Omar and El Aksa, the domes, the terraces, the colonnades, the kiosks and fountains—is perhaps the very noblest specimen of building art in Asia."

Other places of special interest that we visited were the Church of St. Anne, a very ancient building erected to the memory of the highly revered St. Anne, the mother of the Virgin Mary. It is said to mark the dwelling of St. Anne and the birth-place of the Virgin. Also the German Protestant





GREEK CHAPEL IN THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE, JERUSALEM.



Church of the Redeemer, the site of which formerly belonged to the Knights of St. John and was presented by the Sultan to the Crown-Prince of Germany, when he was on a visit to Constantinople in 1869. The fine building retains some of the ancient walls and architecture and was dedicated not long since during a visit of the Emperor of Germany.

We went through the Via Dolorosa, supposed to be the route along which Christ passed on his way to the Cross. Along it are the fourteen so-called Stations of the Cross, supposed to show the spot where the cross was placed on Jesus' shoulders, the spots where he twice fell under its weight, where it was transferred to the shoulder of Simon of Cyrene, where he spoke to the women who followed him, where St. Veronica wiped his face, etc. If this were really the road he went who could pass along it without tear-dimmed eyes? What wonder that the pilgrims who believe in it kiss the stones under their feet with passionate devotion and press their lips against the wall! But there is no likelihood that this is the exact way, for the street of Christ's time must be buried at least forty feet beneath the rubbish of centuries.

On this street and spanning it is the Ecce Homo Arch, said to mark the spot where Pilate brought Jesus forth wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe and presented him to the multitude for

their pity with the memorable words, "Ecce Homo!" "Behold the Man!" Next to this arch there is a modern church, called the Ecce Homo Church, where we attended a service, the worshippers all being women and dressed in white robes.

We wish we had space in which to tell of the Jewish Wailing Place with the sights and sounds there, of Solomon's Stables, under one corner of the Temple Area, of the great cisterns under the same platform, of the Pool of Hezekiah, and the Pool of Bethesda, of the Tower of David, the Tower of Antonia, called Pilate's Judgment Hall, of Robinson's Arch, all of which we visited; also of the convents and monasteries and bazaars and schools and synagogues, to all of which there seemed to be no limit.

The necessary limits of this chapter permit now of only a glimpse at the almost as many interesting places just outside the city. There is Mount Zion to the south with the Tomb of David and its Chamber of the Last Supper, the Church of St. James, the House of Caiaphas, its lepers' quarters and its schools and convents. There is the Mount of Olives to the east, with its wonderful view and its many sacred sites, the Chapel of the Ascension, the Russian Buildings with their six-storied belvedere tower, the low-lying Church of the Creed, where the apostles are said to have drawn up the creed, and the

Church of the Lord's Prayer, built as her tomb by a French Princess, and on the sides of which the Lord's Prayer appears in thirty-two different languages. It is said to be on the spot where Christ taught his disciples this wonderful Model Prayer. Here also are the Tombs of The Prophets, and, coming down the side of the hill toward the city, the golden-domed Russian Church of St. Mary Magdalene, in the Greek Garden of Gethsemane, the Tombs of St. James and Zachariah, the Pillar of Absalom, at which the Jews throw stones in memory of Absalom's disobedience, and last of all, near the base, the traditional site of the Garden of Gethsemane. Happily in this case the tradition tallies closely with the Bible narrative, and it is quite possible to believe that this retired spot indicates the true location of the hallowed place in which the Redeemer, on the night of his betrayal prayed in agony of spirit while his sweat was as it were great drops of blood, falling down to the ground. The walls enclose about an acre of ground in which are eight gnarled olive trees of extraordinary girth and great age.

There is no space in which to tell of the Valley of the Kidron, here, with its innumerable tombs, nor of the Pool and Village of Siloam. Nor of the Valley of Hinnom, on the other side of the city, with its tombs and its catacombs, and the Hill of

Evil Counsel above it on one side and the Mount of Offense on the other, with its traditional Potter's Field to bury strangers in. Nor of the impressive Tombs of the Kings and Tombs of the Judges to the north, nor of the wonderful underground cave known as Solomon's Quarries, one of the most interesting places we visited. Think of an underground cavern, and before the days of gunpowder, quarried out of the solid rock seven hundred feet long, three hundred feet wide and averaging forty feet in height. Some of the big blocks are there still just as the workmen left them.

But to our mind the most impressive place of all to visit is the spot of ground lying on a little knoll just outside the Damascus Gate, and almost immediately across the road from the quarries we have mentioned. This, in the opinion of an ever increasing number of scholars, is the veritable site of the crucifixion, the "green hill far away, outside a city wall," the true site of Calvary. We do not believe there was one person in all our large party who was able to throw off the impression that this is the true site. The evidence for it seems overwhelming.

Review in your mind just what the Bible says about Calvary. First, that it was a place outside the city walls—Matthew, John and Hebrews. Secondly, that it was a place nigh to the city—the

Gospel of John. Thirdly, that it was a place popularly known under the general designation of "the place of the skull,"—Matthew and John. Fourthly, that it was nigh to one of the leading thoroughfares to and from Jerusalem—Matthew and Mark. Fifthly, that it was nigh to sepulchres and gardens—the Gospel of John. Lastly, that it was very conspicuous, that it could be seen by those at a distance—Matthew, Luke and John.

Now, what are the facts as we see them here today? First, that this so-called "true site," or "Gordon's Calvary," is outside the walls, not only outside the present walls, but of the old ones, too, of the time of Christ. Secondly, that it was nigh the city, being only just outside the gate. Thirdly, that it is in shape like a skull, both in its rounded outline and in the peculiar lay of the upward-bulging rock-formation which shapes the hill. It may be imagination, but as you stand at a little distance on the side toward the Damascus road you cannot get rid of the impression of its being shaped like and even of its having the appearance of a skull. It is also traditionally known as a place of execution, or the "place of stoning." Fourthly, as the Scripture account requires, it is on one of the present and ancient thoroughfares to and from Jerusalem, namely, the road to Damascus, which, as far as is known, has been about in its present location since



the beginning of the city's history. Fifthly, it is a prominent hill and the only prominent one to the north near the city, and it can easily be seen from all directions. But lastly, and more strangely still, as it may seem, this view has been greatly strengthened in recent times by the discovery of a tomb in a garden near by, and just the right sort of a tomb, a genuine ancient rock-hewn sepulchre. May not this have been the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea into which the body of Jesus was placed? It fulfills all the historical conditions, and it has not been tampered with, covered over with marble or hung with golden lamps, but is left in the broken condition in which it was found, except that the broken front has been partly walled up. At any rate, when we made our way into it and placed our hands on the walls and saw the place where Christ's body is thought to have rested, an impression came upon us which we could not shake off, verily "This is the place where the Lord lay." And this impression and all others favorable to this site were greatly deepened, too, as on that Sunday morning a large company of us gathered on the summit of the little hill and held a never-to-be-forgotten service here. The old Bible became a new Bible to us as the accounts of the crucifixion were read in our hearing, and tears stood in many an eye as we sang together the hymn which





INTERIOR OF THE MOSQUE OF OMAR, JERUSALEM.



bore the needed lesson for us then, as it does for every one of our readers:

“There is a green hill far away,  
Without a city wall,  
Where the dear Lord was crucified,  
Who died to save us all.  
We may not know, we cannot tell  
What pains he had to bear;  
But we believe it was for us  
He hung and suffered there.

He died that we might be forgiven,  
He died to make us good  
That we might go at last to heaven  
Saved by His precious blood.  
Oh dearly, dearly has he loved;  
And we must love Him too,  
And trust in His redeeming,  
And try His work to do.”

## CHAPTER XVI.

### TO BETHANY AND THE GOOD SAMARITAN INN.

**T**O THE VISITOR in Palestine there is often a strange fascination even in the names of places. This seems to be true without regard to whether there is much or little now remaining to be seen when the places are reached. For example, the village of Bethany is in itself a most unattractive place—only a cluster of dilapidated mud-and-stone huts; but what does that matter? Who could find himself within possible reach of the place and not feel an almost irresistible drawing to visit it, to have his eyes rest upon what does remain, and especially upon the unchanging natural surroundings in which the village where Christ was so frequently a guest was located? Likewise the mention of Bethlehem, or Bethel, or Jacob's Well, or scores of other places, brings the same restless longing to set out at once for the region in which they are found. We doubt not that it is this same law of association which causes the simple words, "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho," to throw such a peculiar glamour of interest around the short side-trip that

takes one from Jerusalem down to Jericho and the Jordan and the Dead Sea. Though it is not an easy trip, not unattended with inconvenience from heat and dust, most of the year, when the Jordan valley and the Dead Sea basin are reached, yet there is scarcely a visitor to Jerusalem who would think of omitting it.

As in the time of Christ, it is still "down to Jericho," the descent being four thousand feet in less than twenty miles. The road, for fortunately a good one has been built in recent years, leads most of the way down a winding ravine, through a remarkably rough, barren and desolate country. It passes through the hilly, treeless tract, bounded on the east by the Dead Sea, on the west by the "hill country of Judea," and stretching to the south as far as the wells of Beer-sheba, known as the "wilderness of Judea." Our western conception of a wilderness is a portion of country covered with trees and underbrush. It may be very rich and fertile. But the people of Palestine know what a wilderness really is, and they have it here in this rough, uninhabited, desolate waste. It was among these barren hills that John the Baptist was trained for his great mission, and where he began his ministry. These glens, where now the wild Bedouins pitch their black tents, and rock-ribbed hills once echoed to his voice, and in the same direction in which we were traveling,

“Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan” hurried, some with eager curiosity and others with sincere desire, “to be baptized of him in Jordan.”

The road at the first, as it leaves Jerusalem, passes the Garden of Gethsemane, and then, leading along the front of the Mount of Olives, gradually ascending, it winds around the southern slope about one hundred feet below its summit and crosses a depression in the ridge which connects that mount with the Mount of Offence. Here it begins to bend toward the east. It is near this point that the spot is shown where Judas is said to have hanged himself. After further skirting the southern slope of the mountain, passing a large slaughter-house, the place is pointed out where stood the barren fig tree which was cursed by Christ. Soon thereafter, about forty minutes after our leaving Jerusalem, we came to Bethany, where we made our first halt on the way.

The Arabic name of Bethany is El Azariyah, from Lazarus, or Lazarium, the Arabs having taken the L for an article. We were almost sorry to think of this wretched place as the site of the loved Bethany of the time of Christ. It is, as some one has said, “a little town of hovels and of sore-eyed children crying pitifully for ‘backshish.’” But the poverty stricken condition of the village is due to lack of energy on the part of the people rather than to lack

of good location. For the place is beautifully situated, upon quite a fertile part of the mountain, and in the midst of abounding olive, pomegranate, fig and almond trees. We are told that at a very early period churches and monasteries were erected here and that spots of traditional interest were pointed out to pilgrims. The Roman lady Paula is said to have visited a church on the site of Lazarus' grave, and Milicent, wife of Fulke, fourth king of Jerusalem, is reported to have built a nunnery here beside the Church of St. Lazarus, in A. D. 1138. The most conspicuous object now visible is a ruined tower, the so-called "Castle of Lazarus," said to be older than the time of the Crusaders, but the origin of which is not known. But the most interesting places are the Tomb of Lazarus and the house of Mary and Martha. At the Tomb of Lazarus, which is located at the very centre of the village, the traveler is led down a flight of dark, narrow stone steps, twenty-four in number, into a small underground chamber which is said to have been a chapel once, and is now both a Muslim and Christian place of prayer. Here, turning to the east and descending three steps more we reached the so-called tomb-chamber of Lazarus. It is roughly lined with masonry and its whole appearance very unlike that of any Jewish tomb. We believe that if the tomb in which Lazarus was buried is still in existence

at all, it is far more likely that it is one of the many caverns outside the village to the southeast and south than this chamber under a mosque in the very heart of the village itself.

At a distance of about one hundred and fifty feet from the Tomb of Lazarus we were shown the ruins of the reputed house of the two sisters, Mary and Martha, whom Jesus loved. Our only wonder was, as we saw its diminutive size, how Martha could have been cumbered with much serving. Opposite, upon an elevated bank, were some shattered walls which they told us was the house of Simon the leper! But however much we may question the reliability of these traditional sites, one thing is sure beyond question, namely, that the present Bethany occupies about the site of the Jewish village which was to Jesus one of the best loved spots on earth. Bethany! What a privilege it was to linger here and think of him who used to rest here under the blooming almond trees, and who in the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus so often found shelter and refreshment and that responsive love which was elsewhere so generally denied him! Let us not overlook the fact that it was hither, too, he brought his disciples on that day when his earthly mission being ended, he was taken up from their sight into heaven. One of the evangelists describing the ascension, plainly states that Jesus led out his disciples "as far as Bethany,"





THE TOMB OF LAZARUS, BETHANY.



and that when they returned it was from Jerusalem "a Sabbath day's journey." How strange that churches of Ascension should be built on the summit of the Mount of Olives which overlooks Jerusalem, when the Scripture account teaches so plainly that "he led them out as far as Bethany!"

Beyond Bethany, the road leading up a gradual ascent, in a few minutes we came to the so-called "Stone of Rest." This is a rough piece of rock about three feet long which many ignorant pilgrims devoutly kiss. It is on the left hand side of the road and is reputed to mark the spot where Martha met Jesus, as he came to see the mourning sisters after the death of their brother Lazarus. The incident is recorded by John in the eleventh chapter of his Gospel, where it is stated: "Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went out and met him, but Mary sat still in the house. Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." A little to the south of this stone, on the right side of the road, the Greek Catholics have erected a chapel and convent on ancient foundation walls. The chapel encloses another stone which they believe to be the genuine one. The Arabic name of the place is El Juneineh, or "Little Garden."

At a distance of about one mile further, the road descends by a serpentine course into a narrow valley

called Wady El Hod, or the valley of the watering place, and within the distance of another mile we came to the famous watering place itself. What the visitor sees is a copious spring, about one hundred yards below the road, flowing from a broken Saracenic arch of cut stone, the waters running away in a good-sized stream down the valley. We were told that a handsome building once enclosed this spring and that there was a much used khan here, both dating from some time in the sixteenth century. It is certain that for at least four hundred years the place has been designated as the Apostles' Spring, the name being given on the assumption that the apostles must have drunk of its waters on their journeys. It is to-day a general halting place for travelers, where men and animals slake their thirst and tarry for conversation and rest. On the opposite side of the road from the spring some enterprising Arabs have set up, in a portion of an old stone building, a so-called coffee-shop, where a few very undesirable refreshments can be purchased. It is mostly a place where the natives gather to sip Turkish coffee and smoke their nargilehs, or water-pipes, which they do with an air of leisure as if to-day would last forever and no one ever could be in a hurry.

From this point the road continues to descend, with now and then a short level stretch. Once or

twice it crosses the ravine on an arched stone bridge. There are evidences everywhere that there must be a great rush of water along the torrent beds during the rainy season. About half way to Jericho the road crosses the saddle of a high ridge, in passing from one wady to another, and here is the traditional site of the parable of the Good Samaritan. The character of the country here about is certainly such as to make it an inviting place for highwaymen, and from our own experience and observation it became easy for us to believe thieves much more plentiful in this country than are the Good Samaritans. Here at the road side just over the crest of the hill a new khan, or inn, has been built, with a high walled enclosure containing possibly an acre of ground at the back of it, for confining animals of any caravans that may tarry. The old inn, for there has long been a caravansary here, is in ruins on a knoll just above. Of course we all stopped at the Good Samaritan Inn. There is good water here—at least it is said to be good, but since the well is in the middle of the cattle yard, we took the keeper's word for it, and did not taste it. There is also quite a museum attached to the inn, and one could buy old firearms, swords, spears and primitive weapons of wood, or modern canteens, in which to bring back Jordan water, and many other things likely to strike the fancy of travelers.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE BROOK CHERITH AND JERICHO.

**H**AVING LIGHTENED our purses a little and taken sufficient rest we resumed our journey from the Good Samaritan Inn, only to find that the wildest and most desolate part of the road was yet before us. On the one side the white limestone rocks reared their cones a thousand feet above us, the sunshine on their barren sides proving very trying to the eyes, while on the other side were deep gorges, falling so rapidly away that many could scarcely bear to look over their precipitous sides into the gloomy depths below. This deep ravine as it nears the Jordan plain is called the Wadi El Kelt; or rather, this is the name given to the stream which most of the year goes rushing through it. There is no reason to doubt that this is the "Brook Cherith," by which Elijah was hidden and fed by ravens until the brook ran dry. It is the only brook "before Jordan" suitable for such concealment. We attach no importance to the claim of some one who, especially anxious to do away with a Bible miracle, claims that Elijah was fed here by a tribe of migrat-

ing Arabs who happened to have the same name as the Hebrew word for ravens. We accept the account in its simplicity, just as it stands, that "the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening, and he drank of the brook." That is all any one knows of the matter, and it certainly is not a very incredible thing to happen. He who giveth food to "the young ravens which cry" could certainly feed one of his prophets here by the Brook Cherith.

Unattractive as is this dark abyss as a place to live, yet it is a fact that the example of Elijah recommended it to a great many people in succeeding ages; for in the walls of the ravine, so high above the bed of the stream as to seem absolutely inaccessible, we saw grottoes, and little walled cells on ledges of rock, where monks and hermits make their abode even to this day. It is said that in the fourth and fifth centuries monks swarmed in all the desert places of Palestine. We can easily believe it for unmistakable evidences of their presence are seen in many regions, especially here and on the eastern face of Mount Quarantania, just below, the traditional site of Christ's temptation. The ranges of cliffs here seem to have been honey-combed with cells and caverns and chapels and sepulchres and tunnels and staircases, the work of hosts of devout but superstitious anchorites and pilgrims. Especially on the

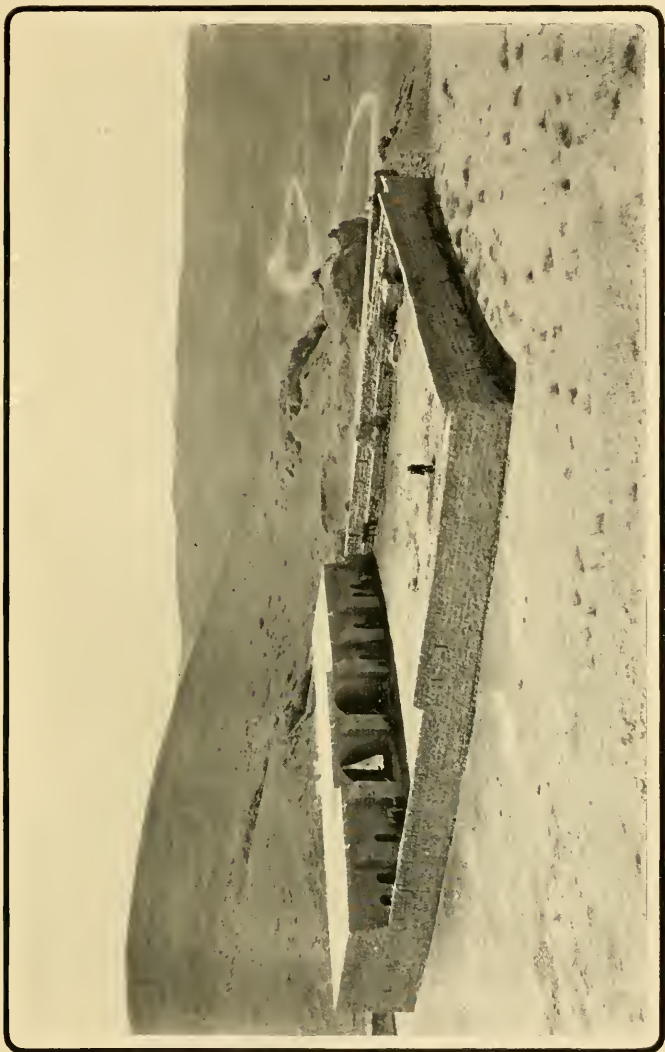


point of Mount Qaurantania did we see numbers of cells and cliff dwellings stuck like swallows' nests on the ledges of rock or in the caves, some of which are occupied all the year round. We were told that every spring a number of devout Abyssinian Christians are in the habit of coming here and of remaining the forty days of Lent, in order to observe this time of penance on the exact spot where they suppose our Saviour to have fasted and been tempted—for this is the wilderness region where he was during the awful testing he underwent at the opening of his public ministry.

We have anticipated a little in mentioning Mount Quarantania just here, as it was not visible until we came out into the Jordan plain.

As we came out from between the hills and descended rapidly toward the level a magnificent view presented itself, for the valley of the Jordan, here about sixteen miles wide, the Dead Sea and the mountains of Moab beyond, all lay before us like a great map or a picture. As one approaches the base of the hill the first object of special interest that catches the eye is the remains of a large ancient reservoir. It is five hundred and sixty-four feet long and four hundred and seventy-one feet wide, and is called by the natives Birket Musa, the Pool of Moses. Its eastern wall is still almost perfect and stands about eight feet above the accumulated





THE GOOD SAMARITAN INN ON THE ROAD TO JERICHO.



earth inside; but the other walls are much broken and the pool is nearly filled up. It must once have held an immense quantity of water. It doubtless belonged to the ancient system of conduits which once irrigated this whole district and rendered it a veritable paradise for beauty and fertility. It is thought it may be a pool constructed by Herod near his great palace at Jericho, for this, it appears, is the site of the Jericho of New Testament times.

The name Jericho has been applied to three different cities, of different times succeeding one another, and all in this immediate vicinity though occupying three different sites. First there was the Canaanitish city, destroyed by Joshua, when the people marched around its walls. Secondly, there was the Roman Jericho of the Herods and New Testament times. And then finally there is the present town which was founded by the Crusaders.

The Jericho of to-day is one of the meanest and most unattractive places in all Palestine. It consists of a small collection of huts of the most squalid tumble-down sort, partly built of sun-dried bricks and partly of small rough stones, and is inhabited by the laziest sort of lazy Arabs. It has two extremely poor hotels, one called the Jordan House and the other the Gilgal House. The only remains of any interest here are a portion of an ancient church, now in the hands of the orthodox Greeks,

and a building resembling a tower on the southeast side of the village. It was probably a watch-tower intended to protect the crops against the incursions of the wild Bedouins; though since the fifteenth century it has commonly been reported to occupy the site of the home of Zacchæus. It is said that near by there once stood a sycamore tree into which Zacchæus climbed to see Christ, as he was passing by.

The ancient Jericho, of Joshua's time, lay nearly two miles to the northwest of the present village, near by what is now known by Europeans as "Elisha's Fountain," though by the native Arabs the fountain is called "Ain es Sultan," or the Fountain of the Sultan. It is a great mound of earth and it is believed that excavations and explorations there will some day in the near future reveal treasures of untold value to archæologists and the students of Biblical history. Dr. Bliss in visiting this mound, which is called Tell es Sultan, in 1894, found fragments of very ancient pottery and portions of a wall. "I confess," he says, "that this wall sent a thrill through me. If Tell es Sultan is a mass of debris caused by the ruin of several mud-brick towns over the first Jericho, then there is good reason to suppose that this wall, uncovered near the base of the mound, at its edge, is the very wall which fell before the eyes of the Captain Joshua. Tell es

Sultan is a long mound, over one thousand two hundred feet in length from north to south, about fifty feet high, with four superimposed mounds, the highest being some ninety feet above the fountain, which is at the east, but not more than sixty or seventy feet above the ground at the west, as the mound occurs where the land slopes down to the plain."

The Jericho of the Saviour's time lay not far from the present village, but somewhat to the south and nearer the hills. The town was of considerable size and enclosed by walls. The vegetation in and about it was very rich, it being called "the city of palms," and even down to the seventh century of our era date-palms were common and the region was noted for its fertility. From Elisha's Fountain, from other fountains further away, from the brook Cherith, and possibly even from the Jordan itself water was copiously conveyed in aqueducts and in streams for irrigation, and the whole district around the town was a flourishing oasis of gardens and fields. Even to-day, at any spot where water is brought, there may be seen patches of cucumbers and melons and maize and various kinds of vegetables growing thriftily, and we doubt not a little enterprise could transform the whole district into a paradise of beauty and fruitfulness—though the region is so hot most of the year, lying as it does in a depression nearly nine hundred feet below the

level of the sea, that we think few people would care to make it a place of permanent residence.

The region was at one time especially noted for its balsam gardens, though the balsam plant has now disappeared entirely. We know that in the time of Christ shady sycamores stood by the way-side, though now thorn bushes are about the largest trees seen. It is from this variety Christ's crown of thorns is said to have been made. The bushes are used by the Bedouins for the almost unapproachable fences they place around their gardens and huts. The revenues derived from this region were counted a very desirable addition to their income by the Roman conquerors, Mark Antony at one time as a special favor assigned them to Cleopatra. They were afterward recovered for himself by Herod the Great, who embellished the city with palaces and constituted it his winter residence, as being the most beautiful spot for the purpose in his dominions. As late as the occupation of the Crusaders the revenues of the plain about Jericho were estimated at twenty-five thousand dollars a year, these being derived mostly from the cultivation of sugar cane. A number of ruins of sugar mills may still be seen in the vicinity.

The position of Jericho, at the opening of the pass leading up to Jerusalem, made it a place of general rendezvous for pilgrim bands going to and

returning from the great religious festivals of the Jews at Jerusalem, and we recall that on his last journey to that city, "with his face set steadfastly toward Jerusalem," Jesus tarried here for a brief time. It was on this occasion he healed the two blind men. Some one has wisely pointed out the fact that the distinction between the then new and old towns may well solve the seeming discrepancy between Matthew, who makes the miracle to have been when Jesus was leaving Jericho, and Luke who says it was "when Jesus was come nigh unto Jericho."

In ancient times one of the schools of the prophets was established here, and the place was frequently honored by the visits of Elijah and Elisha. To this school Elijah came on his last round of visitation just before his translation, and it was on the return of Elisha from witnessing his predecessor's ascent into heaven that, on the request of the people, he healed the bitter waters of the fountain. We can testify that the waters are "sweet to this day."

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### TO GILGAL AND THE DEAD SEA.

THE FACT OUGHT not to be overlooked that the ancient Gilgal, the place of the first encampment of the Israelites in Canaan, lies in the vicinity of Jericho. The site has been discovered on a slight elevation about a mile east of the present Jericho, at a place which bears the almost similar name to the original one, the present title being Jiljulieh. The only remains apparent on the surface of the ground are a large ruined reservoir by the side of a wide-spreading tamarisk tree, and several rounded hillocks of artificial construction. In some of these mounds hewn stone pottery and flint knives have been found. It was here the Israelites pitched their tents immediately after their passage over Jordan and set up the twelve memorial stones taken from the bed of the river. Here also "the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten the old corn of the land," and here they kept the first Passover for four days after the passage into the promised land. Here, too, the tabernacle was set up, and its sacred ark was permitted to rest until removed to Shiloh. Here



Joshua stood, on a little knoll, when he saw the Jehovah-angel, the captain of the Lord's hosts, stand with drawn sword over Jericho. Here, after the fall of Jericho and Ai, Joshua received the Gibeonites who had come only from Gibeon, some twenty-three miles distant, and yet represented themselves, by displaying mouldy bread, worn-out garments and broken shoes, as coming from a far away country, and by their device obtained a treaty of peace and spared lives.

From the frequent references to it in the Scriptures Gilgal must have been quite a place. In the wars of the Judges and of Saul we find the people frequently assembled here. Here Samuel judged Israel, and here instructed Saul to come and tarry seven days while by burnt offerings and sacrifices he would find out God's will, but upon which occasion Saul himself turned prophet. But, as we have said, nothing now remains of Gilgal excepting a few heaps of ruins and a portion of an old cistern or reservoir.

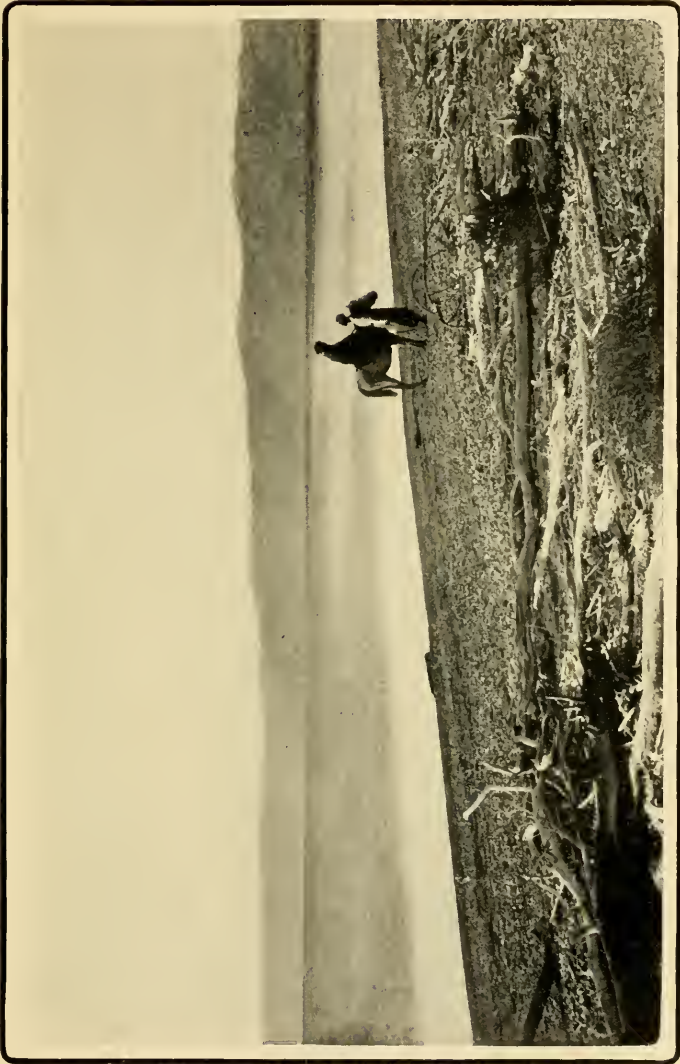
After a not very comfortable night at the hotel in Jericho, disturbed by the screeching of jackals outside our windows and the presence of more diminutive animals still nearer at hand, we started early in the morning for the Dead Sea. The distance is about six miles to the nearest point, which is at the northwest corner about two miles west of

the mouth of the Jordan. By and by our road brought us off the more solid road of the plain and down into a region of small cones with frequent pitlike valleys between them, where in the lowest places water was seen oozing out of the soil. The ground near these places was extremely sticky, and evidently in wet weather is rendered almost impassable. These were doubtless the "slime pits" in which horses are known to have sometimes perished. Such as these must have been the slime pits into which the king of Sodom and Gomorrah fell, as we are told, when he was fleeing from Chedorlaomer.

At length we reached the shore. The Dead Sea! It was a wonderful sight. We had pictured in our mind, from what we had read, that we should see a desolate shore, a moaning body of dark, disagreeable smelling water, and barrenness and death on every hand. But we found it quite otherwise. There was a beautiful pebbly beach, easy of approach, and the water was as calm and smooth as glass and transparently clear. It was a really lovely sheet of blue water, but in some respects as deceptive as beautiful, for when we stooped down and tasted it we were almost stunned. It was the most nauseous, bitter, stinging dose we remember to have taken, the taste remaining on the tongue for an hour or more. But this is easy to be accounted for. The water holds in solution more than five times as much

salt as the water of the ocean, mingled with chlorides of magnesium, calcium, potassium and other mineral salts. These all impart to it an extremely bitter and sickening taste. The small waves that break on the shore roll up on the pebbly beach in a heavy foam like soap-suds, and when you put your hand in the water it feels like oil. To float on this briny deep requires no effort, but to keep the feet and lower limbs below the surface requires a great deal. Though probably all in the party had heard that the water of the Dead Sea would bear up those who bathed in it, yet we believe that all who went in were surprised at its extraordinary buoyancy. Yet one ought not to be surprised for it has been the subject of remark by all travelers who have visited the Dead Sea from the time of Josephus down. Josephus even exaggerated the facts, as witness the following description. "It bears up the heaviest things that are thrown into it, nor is it easy for any one to make things sink therein to the bottom if he had a mind to do so. Accordingly when Vespasian went to see it, he commanded that some who could not swim should have their hands tied behind them and be thrown into the deep, when it so happened that they all swam as if a wind forced them upwards." He added other marvels such as that "black clods of bitumen, resembling in shape headless bulls" would rise to the surface. Speaking

of Vespasian's unique way of enjoying himself, Dr. Wm. M. Thomson, the author of *The Land and the Book*, says: "It must have been rare sport for that rough and callous-hearted emperor to see the victims tumbling about in this great caldron of brine in helpless perplexity," and adds that he distinctly remembers a somewhat similar contest he had the first time he plunged into this great sea. Dr. Edward Robison, the Palestine explorer, is quoted as saying: "Two of us bathed in the sea; and although I never swam before, either in fresh or salt water, yet here I could sit, stand, lie, or swim in the water without difficulty." Stevens, in his *Travels in Egypt and the Holy Land*, tells us that he swam a horse into it, and says that as soon as his body touched the water he was afloat. He struggled with all his force to preserve his equilibrium, but the moment he stopped moving he turned over on his side again, and almost on his back, kicking his feet out of water and snorting with terror. An irritation of the skin is often experienced by persons who bathe here, but this is probably caused chiefly by exposure to the fierce rays of the sun. But such are the saponaceous properties of the water that after being in it a short time one feels as if smeared with grease or soap, and it is usual to take a bath soon after in the Jordan in order to get rid of the sensation. Owing to the great density of the water the waves do not rise



THE DEAD SEA.



as high under a storm of wind as in other seas, but they beat with greater proportionate force. Lieutenant W. F. Lynch compares their beat upon the sides of his boats to the heavy strokes of a hammer. The great weight of the waves is given as the reason why boats are scarcely found at the Dead Sea at all. If any are built they can bear the pounding of the leaden waves but a brief time and break to pieces.

Of course, the presence of so large a quantity of foreign matter in the water of the Dead Sea is easily to be accounted for. The lake has no outlet. Mr. Moody used to ask the question: "Why is the Dead Sea dead?" and then answer by saying, "Because it is always receiving and never giving." Now this is the literal fact. It has no outlet; and consequently the water which flows into it through the Jordan and the smaller streams along its shores can pass away only by evaporation. From this it is plain that all the surplus water which has poured into this deep basin from the period of its first formation till the present hour, has evaporated, leaving in the sea all the solids which it held in solution.

The amount of water which has thus flowed in and evaporated is simply tremendous. It has been calculated that the average fall of water into the Dead Sea is more than six millions of tons daily, the whole of which prodigious quantity must be carried off by evaporation. This accounts for the unusual



quantity of solid matter which this body of water contains. We are told that when the water passes the point of saturation, deposits will begin to form on the bottom and the bed of the sea to fill up. It would seem to require no unusual amount of solid matter in such a quantity of water daily evaporating for thousands of years to leave the result as we find it; yet we must add to the consideration the fact that a large number of mineral springs flow into the Jordan and some into the Dead Sea itself. Moreover, on the southwestern shore of the sea there is a mountain of rock-salt seven miles long and though lightly covered with rock and soil, preventing its rapid disintegration, yet the winter rains do yearly wash a considerable portion of it into the sea. The immensity of the evaporation referred to is due to the intensity of the direct heat of the sun during the long summer, which lasts in this low tropical chasm from March until November, as also to the reflected heat from the bare and lofty masses of rock which constitute the mountain-walls on either side.

The sea itself is about forty-six miles long and nearly ten wide at its widest part. It is the lowest body of water in the world, being one thousand two hundred and ninety-two feet below the Mediterranean. Its greatest depth is about one thousand three hundred and ten feet and its mean depth about one thousand feet. It lies four thousand three hundred



feet below the source of the Jordan, nearly four thousand feet below Jerusalem, and, as some one has said, "If a plummet were dropped from a level corresponding with the summit of the Mount of Olives to the deepest part of the sea it would require the playing out of a line five thousand two hundred and thirty feet long." As we have said, there is nothing to compare with this in any other part of the world.

As is well known, the name Dead Sea is of comparatively recent date, post-biblical. The Hebrews called it the Salt Sea, also the Eastern Sea, or "the sea of the plain." In the apocryphal book of Esdras it is called the "Sodomitish Sea." In the Talmud also it is called the "Sea of Sodom." The Arabs commonly called it Bahr Lut, or Lake of Lot. The Greeks and Romans spoke of it as the "Sea of Asphalt," but finally entitled it the Dead Sea, which name has completely superseded all others in the language of modern literature, and will probably continue to hold its pre-eminence, notwithstanding the superstitions in which it partly originated. For this name undoubtedly grew out of the exaggerated stories told in regard to the sluggishness of the waters and the deadly nature of its atmosphere—such as that birds flying over it would instantly drop dead, due to the pestiferous influence of the fumes rising from the water—and probably partly, too, from its supposed connection with the fate of Sodom

and Gomorrah. Possibly it was due also to the fact that the sea is really dead, in the sense that it contains no living thing of any kind. This is now a well ascertained scientific fact, but it has always been known that there were no fish or other animate creatures in it, no shells or corals upon its shores. Even when fish flow in from the Jordan or are placed in the water they speedily die. It is in fact the Dead Sea, and so all men now agree in calling it by that name. But it is not meant to imply that it is not a very beautiful sea, for it certainly is beautiful. The mountains of Moab on the east and of Judea on the west rise to a height of not less than four thousand feet and form a charming frame in which this transparent sheet of water is set like an exquisite picture, or more properly spoken, like a mirror. And the reflections of the mountains on the surface of this deeply-set, heavily-framed mirror are surpassingly beautiful. The Jordan, with its banks of living green, forms a charming feature at the north, while the heavy evaporation from the surface of the water of the sea gives to the atmosphere a rarely beautiful tint of purple such as painters are wont to try to reproduce. Upon the whole, and in the face of all preconceived unfavorable impressions, we are disposed to rank the Dead Sea and its surroundings at least as among the most picturesque and interesting scenes upon which we have been permitted to look. There is but one Dead Sea.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### THE JORDAN AND THE PILGRIMS' BATHING-PLACE.

**H**AVING GATHERED some curious pebbles from the shore and filled our cans with the water, we turned our faces from the Dead Sea toward the Jordan. We had ridden in a northeasterly direction for an hour when we came to the so-called first, or "outer banks," but soon descended a second embankment and reached the stream itself at the spot known as the Pilgrims' Bathing-place. Of course we thought of "On Jordan's stormy banks I stand," of the river as symbolical of the death struggle, but as we crossed—for a shilling—in a strong Arab boat it did not seem so terrible, save at times the flood was so rapid, for embossed in the verdant wild growth of foliage it was indeed a vision of peace and beauty. We shall not try to describe it at any length. It must be seen. It certainly has charms of its own. But it is as its mighty history comes crowding into mind that one becomes deeply impressed with the fact of being there, and begins to appreciate what it means to be privileged to stand on the shores of a stream where such marvelous deeds have been performed.

Pilgrims are attracted to the Jordan chiefly by its associations with John the Baptist and the baptism of Christ, though which if any of the several bathing-places now pointed out was the location of Christ's baptism no one can decide. To be baptized in the Jordan even as early as the time of Constantine was esteemed a special privilege and pilgrims came here for the purpose. In the sixth century Antoninus records that he found a great concourse of pilgrims here, and says that both banks were paved with marble, that a wooden cross stood in the middle of the stream, and that after the water had been blessed by the priest the people entered it each wearing a linen garment which was carefully preserved in order afterward to be used as a winding-sheet. In the middle ages too, baptisms in the Jordan were frequent. Since the sixteenth century the time when the great pilgrimage should be made was changed from Epiphany, twelve days after Christmas, to the pleasanter season of Easter.

The coming of religious pilgrims is of course not timed to any one season of the year, but the great day, especially for many among the thousands of pilgrims of the Greek Church who come to Jerusalem each year to spend "holy week," is the Monday after Easter. Lieutenant Lynch in his Narrative tells us that his party reached the Bathing Place, in their descent of the Jordan, on the night of Easter

Sunday, and that on the next morning they witnessed the arrival of the pilgrims. He described the scene as follows: "In the wild haste of a disorderly rout, Copts and Russians, Poles, Armenians, Greeks and Syrians, from all parts of Asia, from Europe, from Africa, and from far-distant America, on they came; men, women and children of every age and hue, and in every variety of costume; talking, screaming, and shouting in almost every known language under the sun. Mounted as variously as those that had preceded them, many of the women and children were suspended in baskets or confined in cages (they were on camels) and with their eyes strained toward the river, heedless of all intervening obstacles, they hurried eagerly forward, dismounting in haste, and disrobing with precipitation, rushed down to the bank and threw themselves into the stream. Each one plunged himself or was dipped by another, three times below the surface in honor of the Trinity, and then filled a bottle or some other utensil from the river. The bathing-dress of many of the pilgrims was a white gown with a black cross upon it. Most of them, as soon as they dressed, cut branches from the *Angus Castus* or the willow, and dipping in the consecrated stream bore them away as memorials of their visit. In another hour they began to disappear, and in less than three hours the trodden

surface of the lately crowded bank bore no human shadow."

We cannot forbear to quote Dr. Wm. M. Thomson's description of a different band of pilgrims he saw on another occasion. He says: "About three o'clock in the morning there was a buzz in the camp, which in a short time became like the 'noise of many waters,' and at four precisely we set forward toward the Jordan, going to the southeast. A large company of guards went before, bearing on long poles flaming torches made of turpentine and old rags, which threw over the plain a flaring light, revealing double ranks of armed horsemen on either side of the hosts, careering in genuine Arab style, and plunging with fearless impetuosity through the grass and bushes to drive out any Bedouins that might be lurking there. The governor, with his body-guard brought up the rear, and thus we were defended on all sides. Nor was this caution misplaced. One poor fellow from Poland, having fallen behind, was attacked, robbed, and stripped naked.

After two hours' ride over an uneven plain, we reached the Jordan as the sun rose over the mountains of Moab. Immediately the pilgrims rushed headlong into the stream, men, woman and children in one indiscriminate mass. The haughty Turk sat upon his horse, and looked with scorn upon this exposure of the 'Christian dogs.' The pilgrims,

however, were highly delighted with the bath. The men ducked the women somewhat as the farmers do their sheep, while the little children were carried and plunged under water, trembling like so many lambs. Some had water poured on their heads in imitation of the baptism of the Saviour, for it is part of the tradition that our blessed Lord was there baptized and the ruins of an old convent near at hand determined the exact location to the perfect satisfaction of the devout pilgrim. The Latins, however, maintain that the event took place higher up the stream, and hence they bathe there. The banks are nearly perpendicular, and very muddy, while the current is astonishingly rapid, and the river is at least ten feet deep. It requires the most expert swimmers to cross it, and one less skilled would be inevitably carried away, as we had melancholy proof. Two Christians and a Turk who ventured too far, were drowned without the possibility of rescue, and the wonder is that more did not share the same fate where multitudes were bathing at once. This sad accident, which should have cast a shade over the whole assembly, produced very little sensation among the pilgrims. In fact, this pilgrimaging seems to obliterate every benevolent feeling from the heart."

Let us not think that such events as these belong only to the somewhat remote past. Down to the present time, especially among the orthodox Greeks,



many attach great importance to the bath in Jordan as the termination of a pilgrimage. The priests wade into the water breast-deep and dip into the stream men, women and children as they approach in white garments. Many of the pilgrims fill jars from the river to be used for baptisms at home. Even a large number in our company of American Protestant Christians, for sentimental reasons, went bathing in the Jordan, and we, too, were among the many who carried back bottles of water to be used in baptisms at home.

Nor do we think such sentiments wholly worthy of criticism. The history of the Jordan has been interwoven with the story of Redemption from that memorable day when Abraham passed over into the Land of Promise. After forty years of wandering in the wilderness Abraham's descendants here witnessed a mighty miracle in their behalf when God rolled back the rushing waters "until all the people had passed clean over Jordan," from the bottom of which they carried up twelve memorial stones and set them up as a reminder of the presence of Jehovah in their midst.

Five hundred and fifty years later at this place was one whose history is overflowing with interest to every lover of God's Word—the noble Elijah. God had made known to him that he would be taken up to heaven by a whirlwind. Elisha was with





SHEPHERDS FORDING THE JORDAN.



him, and would not leave him, but followed him first to Bethel, then to Jericho and at last across the Jordan. "And Elijah took his mantle and wrapped it together and smote the waves, and they divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground. And it came to pass as they still went on, and talked, that behold there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them asunder, and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven." His spiritual father and friend was taken away from Elisha's sight, but his mantle was left him, and standing by the bank of the river he smote the waters with it, "and they parted hither and thither, and Elisha went over." The fifty prophets viewing from afar off, beheld this token of God's presence, and they said, "The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha," and so it was. It was to this same stream Naaman, the leper, came and washed and was healed. It was here Elisha caused the ax to swim at the time the young prophets were building them a home. Yes, and later still, it was here, too, that in response to John the Baptist's mighty calls to repentance there "went out to him Jerusalem and all Judea" to be "baptised of him in Jordan." John's eloquent, burning words, some thought, answered the description of the long expected Messiah. But he quickly answered that he was not the Christ. He said, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness,

Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight," and called upon them to bring forth fruits meet for repentance. Thus did this Voice, the veritable flaming Elijah of the new dispensation, cry in the wilderness while thousands listened, were convicted, repented of their sins and were baptized. But one day, a day of heaven upon earth it certainly was, there walked among the throng One unknown save to John himself; and how tenderly and yet strikingly he introduced him: "Behold the Lamb of God! Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world!" And there stood the long looked for and hoped for Messiah, right in their midst! John was the index finger of the old dispensation pointing to the new. Christ had come, and John was declaring him. But as the first step in his self-revelation Christ asked to be baptized of John in the Jordan, to which he, after an humble expostulation, consented, and they went down together into the water. "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water; and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon him; and lo a voice from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Here, then, somewhere on the margin of the waters where we were standing, began that Divinely-planned and Christ-bidden rite, so sacred and so beautiful, the observance of which

has since spread to every part of the world. If the river was sacred to the Israelites, how much more reason then there is that, while yielding not to any foolish superstitions, it should seem forever sweetly memorable to us.

## CHAPTER XX.

### JOURNEYING TOWARD BETHLEHEM.

**B**ETHLEHEM OF JUDEA the city of David, the little town in which our Saviour was born, is located about six miles south of Jerusalem and crowns the summit of a white limestone ridge which projects eastward from the main line of mountains which runs north and south. For long years our dream of dreams had been that some day our feet might walk the narrow streets and our eyes behold the striking and peculiar scenes that abound in this the birthplace of our Saviour. Now that we were in Palestine, no place seemed to attract us so strongly. The fascination of that sweet story of the shepherds watching their flocks by night, of the appearing of the heavenly host, of the sounding of the angels' song of "Peace on earth, good will toward men," and of the Holy Child Jesus, lying in a manger, was upon us. The day of our visit had arrived. We were early ready to start, and equally ready to use the words of the shepherds who on the first Christmas morning, after the angel songs had hushed and the heavenly visitors had disappeared from their sight, said one to

another: "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us."

It was in the early morning of Saturday, March 15th, 1902, in company with a large party of equally enthusiastic fellow pilgrims, that we took carriages in front of the Hotel du Parc, Jerusalem, and started for the historic little city that had so long attracted us.

A sudden change had come over the weather, which for many days had been sunshiny and beautiful. Occasional gusts of fine rain swept over the hills and the air was cold; but a light that never was on land or sea exalted our thoughts and a heavenly warmth filled our hearts, and we were happy indeed in the prospect before us. Out by the Jaffa Gate, passing the ancient Tower of David, we descended into the Valley of Hinnom, where the falsehearted among the ancient Hebrews used to offer their children to Moloch, as the heathen Canaanites had done before them. The memory of those idolatrous rites and the Divine inflictions of punishment which followed their exercise has been so enduring that the very name of the valley, *Ze Ben Hinnom*, or *Gehenna*, signifies hell, according to both Jewish and Mohammedan usage. Passing the lower end of the so-called Lower Gihon, or Pool of the Sultan, and the Montefiore Cottage Institution for Jews, also the

railway station and the Temple Colony, we soon began to ascend the Hill of the Field of Blood, better known as the Hill of Evil Counsel, bringing painful reminder of our Lord's betrayal. The first title is given because on the hillside lies the tract of land purchased by the priests with the thirty pieces of silver brought back to them by the remorseful Judas; and the second derives its force from the tradition that the summit of the hill was crowned by the country house of Caiaphas, where the enemies of Jesus met to plan his death. Near by, the tree upon which Judas is said to have hanged himself is shown, all its weird branches extending horizontally toward the east.

Once over the ridge, and the beautiful plain of Rephaim lay spread out before us in every direction, covered with fields of growing grain and olive yards, and flowers everywhere. It was a charming scene; and all the more so when from these "mountains round about Jerusalem" we looked backward upon the walls and towers of the city of Zion.

On an eminence to the right and at some distance from the road is a Greek settlement, called Katamon. It is said to mark the location of the house of the devout Simeon (Luke 2: 25-32), who took the infant Saviour in his arms with the words of the *Nunc Dimittis*. The place consists of a small church and the summer residence of the Greek Patriarch.



A little farther on, at the left of the road, we halted at the traditional Well of the Magi. According to the ancient tradition, the Wise Men halted at this in their journey to Bethlehem to refresh themselves by a draught from the well; and as one of them bent over the curb, he saw, to his intense joy, the marvelous star whose disappearance they mourned, reflected in the quiet water. Eagerly they turned their eyes upward to see it shining in the sky, the sign that they were still upon the pathway to the Infant King; and so they gladly took their line of march again.

It is also said that Mary rested here on her way to Bethlehem, from which comes its ancient name *Kathisma*, or *Seat*, the same idea also being preserved in the modern title *Bir Kadismn*, or the Well of the Seat.

At the summit of the highest point between Jerusalem, and Bethlehem, about three miles from each place, we came to the large Greek Convent of Elijah. The ridge upon which it is located is known as *Mar Elias*, or *Hill of Elijah*, and has the local tradition that Elijah, when fleeing from the infuriated Jezebel, after the slaughter of the false prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel, stopped here the first night. It is about half way between *Jezreel* and *Beer-sheba*. The place where he lay, with a stone for his pillow, is still shown. A great boulder opposite the monas-

tery door is shown in which there is a deep impression which is said to have been made by the prophet's foot. On the left of the road, here, there is a well from which the Holy Family is said once to have drunk.

Passing the village of Bet Jala, with its white buildings and the Roman Catholic settlement of Tantur, with its hospital, house for the brethren and chapel, we soon came to the location of another quite silly tradition. Our guide pointed out to us what he entitled the Field of Peas. It is so called from the legend that Christ once asked a man here what he was sowing, and to which the reply was, "stones." The field thereupon produced peas of stone, some of which, it is said, are still to be found on the spot. It is unnecessary to add that we did not find any!

But soon we arrived at an exceedingly interesting spot. We refer to the tomb of Rachel, one of the few undisputed sites in the whole of Palestine. Israelites, Christians and Moslems have but one tradition respecting it, and all agree in recognizing it as the spot where, when Jacob journeyed from Bethel, Rachel, his fair and lovely wife, died and was buried on the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem (Gen. 35:16-19), and where Jacob set a pillar on her grave. The pillar is either gone or covered over by the present tomb, which is in a dome-covered

building with a large square-shaped one in front, forming for it a kind of arcade or vestibule. The tomb stands at the junction of the Hebron and Bethlehem roads a short distance north of Bethlehem. It is visited by thousands of pilgrims every year, many of whom, especially women of the Russian, or Greek Church, manifest very deep emotion as they light their little olive-oil votive lamps and shed tears of sympathy over the last resting place of Jacob's loved and lovely wife, the mother of the noble and revered patriarch Joseph.

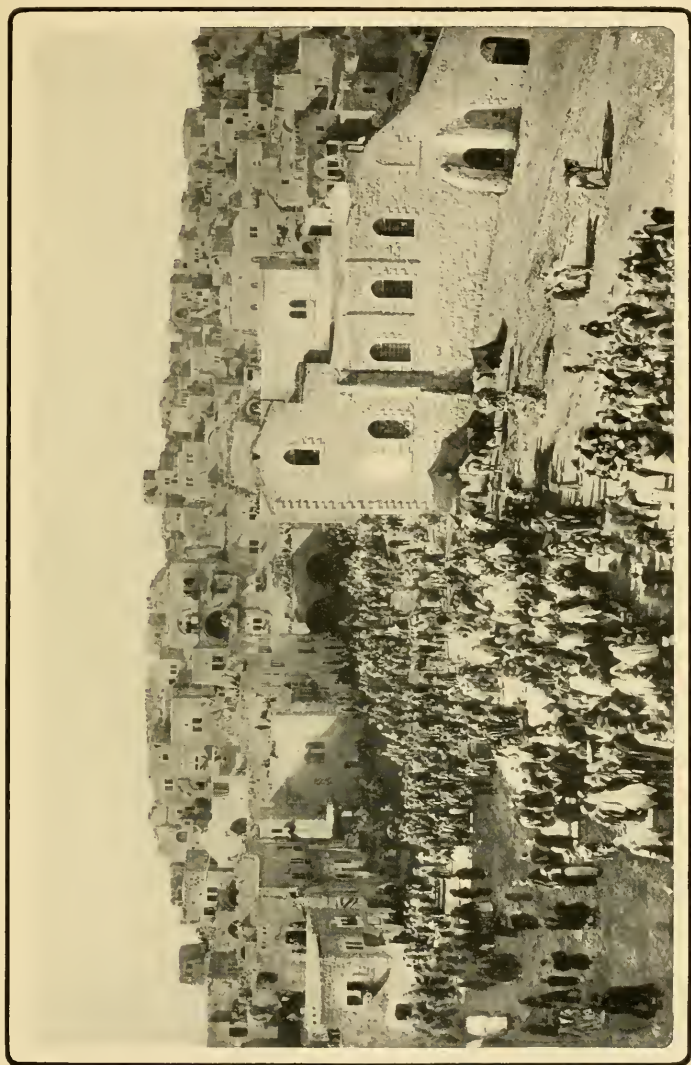
As we have said, the road here divides, one branch leading to Hebron, the other to Bethlehem. Near by there is a spot—not visited by us until we were returning—which vividly recalls the close association of this whole region with the life of David. Near the bend of the road to Bethlehem are three cisterns, dug out of the solid rock. The place is called David's Well. The place recalls the story of that time of Philistine warfare when the enemy held his native town and David was in hiding, possibly in the cave of Adullam, ten miles west of Hebron. "And David longed and said, Oh that one would give me water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!" Three of his men broke through the Philistines, brought water from the well and gave it to him. Though David greatly appreciated the love and loyalty of his men, the jeopardy of their

lives had been so great that he considered the water as the price of blood and reverently poured it out as an offering before the Lord. (2 Sam. 23: 14-17.) No mean nature could have commanded such devotion, and no one but a great soul could have received it as David did. "It is such acts as these," as a recent writer has said, "that show the man's true greatness and reveal to us David as he really was—impulsive, fallible, but warm-hearted, generous, brave and high-minded."

Though for special reasons we kept the main road from the vicinity of Rachel's Tomb to Hebron, not visiting Bethlehem until our return, yet the natural order would be to visit Bethlehem first we shall therefore give it first description.

Our manner of entrance into the little city scarcely seemed suitably reverent, for our Syrian Jehu certainly "drove furiously," and not a few of the passers-by had to dodge with utmost rapidity into deep doorways or find refuge behind the corners of the streets. Of course St. Mary's Church, better known as the Church of the Nativity, was the centre of interest, and we drove at once to the large open space in front of it.

But before visiting this sacred shrine of the ages let us take a brief glance at the city itself and its surroundings. Bethlehem! What thoughts filled our minds as we looked upon its ancient walls and



PILGRIMS ENTERING BETHLEHEM.



stone houses, its curious towers and balconies, its narrow winding streets, and its green surrounding olive yards and beautifully terraced gardens! Bethlehem! The home of Ruth, the birth-place of David, and of David's greater Son! How can we write our feelings as we looked about over the city and its surrounding landscape? Beautiful for situation and truly blessed art thou, "O little town of Bethlehem," chosen of God as the place where the Saviour of the world should take upon himself the robes of our humanity!

## CHAPTER XXI.

### JETHLEHEM, WHERE JESUS WAS BORN.

**B**ETHLEHEM, next to Jerusalem, contains more attractions to the Christian traveller than any other spot on the globe. The little city which at a distance presents a very fine and imposing appearance, contains about eight thousand inhabitants, nearly all of whom are of Christian faith, belonging to the Greek and Latin Churches. The Latins possess a large Franciscan Monastery here, with a hospice, a boys' school, and a handsome new church. They also have a school for girls and a convent belonging to the Sisters of St. Joseph. In the southwestern quarter is the convent of the French Carmelite Sisters, with a church and a seminary. On the hill of the north suburb is a large boys' home and industrial school, with a church, and, near by, a hospital conducted by the Sisters of Charity. The Greeks have a monastery, near the Church of the Nativity, two churches, a school for boys and another for girls. Also connected with the Church of the Nativity the Armenians have a monastery. There is also a branch here of the British Foreign Mis-



sionary Society, with a school for girls and a seminary for female teachers, and a German Protestant institution containing a school for boys and one for girls, with a handsome church. The houses of the city are well built, though like all oriental towns the streets are narrow and dirty as well as steep and rocky. The place has always been noted for its ruddy, stalwart men and beautiful women and children; though judged by our American standard we could hardly term many of the women we saw as beautiful. But how full of thrilling interest was this quiet old town and its inhabitants! Here Ruth lived in poverty and in wealth; here David as a lad walked the streets and led his father's flocks to the hillside pastures; here Samuel came with the anointing oil; yes, and best of all, here began that Life which has "lifted empires off their hinges and turned the stream of centuries out of its course, and still governs the ages"—a life which has revolutionized the world and transformed humanity. No wonder that everything about the place was seen as in a transfiguring halo of glamor and beauty, the people more attractive, the very donkeys and camels as if they had just come from the east with their gifts, and the palm trees as if offering their branches to strew the holy ground! The lowing cattle and meek-eyed sheep might have descended from those that stood around the lowly manger of the

infant Redeemer, and every shepherd appeared to have a mystic character, while every grey-bearded man reminded us of the wise men who saw the star in the east and were guided by it to the Saviour of men. O Bethlehem! Bethlehem, thou art not least among the cities of the earth, for the star that rested over thee has shone on the kingdom of men the whole world round!

But, as we have already said, the Church of the Nativity is the point of supreme interest in Bethlehem. It is an enormous pile of buildings consisting of the Greek, Latin, and Armenian convents, surrounding the central building, or church proper, which is used in common. It certainly looks very Christian-like and amiable to see the three convents of these opposing sects, whose differences are as huge as their edifices, leaning up against one another around the birthplace of their common Saviour. But one must go inside these to "behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." For the unity is not there. Instead of finding unity he will find Mohammedan soldiers with guns and bayonets, smoking nasty nargilehs and mingling foul odors of tobacco with the fragrance of the holy incense, encamped within the holy edifice to keep those so-called holy brethren from cutting each others' throats. But taking each convent separately we found the holy brethren gentle,

polite and quite accommodating, ready to show us all there was to be seen. Within the Church of the Nativity itself each sect has its allotted portion of territory. To overstep this by so much as a hair's breadth would be liable to bring on instant strife. The Greeks hold the Choir, which is just over the grotto of the Nativity. The Latins have a right of way from their own church entrance directly across the intervening space to the stairway leading down to the grotto, passing on their journey the Armenian chapel. If the rug spread in front of the Armenian altar, and carefully folded under so as to cover no more than its allotted space, should happen to encroach by ever so little upon the Latin right of way; or if a Latin procession in walking across the permitted path should happen to encroach upon a pavement set apart to the Armenians, a tremendous uproar would be liable immediately to result, ending possibly in wounds and bloodshed.

We listened with sorrowful wonder to stories of this kind told of those who bear the Master's name here, and so sadly misrepresent him as to bring contempt upon his cause. We marvelled that in Bethlehem, in the very church of Christ's birth, human ears could be so deaf to the echoes of the angelic Advent song: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace!" May the time soon come when this state of things, and the state of the hearts of men, too, shall be changed!

The oldest part of the structure is said to have been erected by order of the Emperor Constantine in A. D. 330, and is claimed to be the most ancient Christian church in the world. It is an example of the earliest Christian style of architecture, extremely simple but grand. It has undergone numerous repairs and "restorations," but from the earliest accounts of it and throughout the reports of all the pilgrims of the middle ages there prevails so remarkable a unanimity regarding both the situation and architecture of the church that there can be little doubt that it has never been seriously altered. Here on Christmas day, in the year 1101, Baldwin was crowned king. In the same century the Byzantine conqueror, Manuel Comnenos, at large expense caused the walls to be adorned with beautiful gilded mosaics, traces of which may still be seen. In 1482 the roof, which had become dilapidated, was repaired, Edward IV., of England, giving the lead for the purpose, and Philip of Burgundy the pine-wood for the beams. The wood-work was executed by artificers of Venice. Near the end of the seventeenth century the Turks stripped the roof for lead with which to make bullets. For many years the Greeks had possession of the building, but in 1852, through the intervention of Napoleon III., the Latins were admitted to a share in the custody of the church.

In the crypt underneath the Choir is the central

shrine of the church, the ever revered Chapel of the Nativity. It is reached by a descent of fifteen stone steps, and bears now little resemblance to a cave. It is an oblong room thirty-eight feet long, twelve feet wide and ten feet high, and lighted with thirty-two lamps. The floor is of marble and the walls are lined with marble, making an effort to imagine the original scene a very laborious one. At the eastern end of the chapel there is an altar in a deep recess in the wall, and under the altar, sunk into the pavement is a large, brightly polished silver star completely encircled by an inscription: "*Hic de Virgine Maria Jesus Christus natus est,*"—"Here Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary." Just above the star hang fifteen lamps, kept perpetually burning, six of which belong to the Greeks, five to the Armenians and four to the Latins. The recess shows a few traces of mosaics, the sacred spot having been richly decorated as early as in the time of Constantine, it is said, and even among the Moslems was held in high repute at a later period. In the vault of the crypt, immediately above the silver star is another one of marble, said to be under that point of the heavens at which the star that guided the wise men, stood stationary to indicate the birthplace of the Saviour.

Opposite the recess of the Nativity are three steps descending to the so-called Chapel of the Manger.

Here is the traditional location of the manger in which the infant Saviour was laid. The cradle here is of white and brown marble. It will be remembered, of course, that the City of Rome claims the possession of the "genuine" manger. It was said to have been carried there by the Empress Helena, and is kept in the church of Santa Maria Maggiore. In the same chapel, to the east, is the "Altar of the Adoration of the Magi," belonging to the Latins. As we walked toward the west end of the chapel we observed a round hole in the pavement, which has been given the title of the Spring of the Holy Family, the tradition being that from this basin water burst forth when needed for the use of the Holy Family. In the fifteenth century the absurd tradition was invented that the star which had guided the Magi fell into this spring, and that only virgins are able to see it.

While we cannot but mourn that so many foolish superstitions have gathered about this grotto of the Nativity, yet these could not reduce in our minds the sense of strong probability that this is the stable in which Christ was born. That caverns are used as stables in Palestine we had abundant proof. That this was once a stable seems entirely probable, and that it was attached to the khan in Bethlehem we see no reason to doubt. The hill on which the town is built is so small that the position of the village

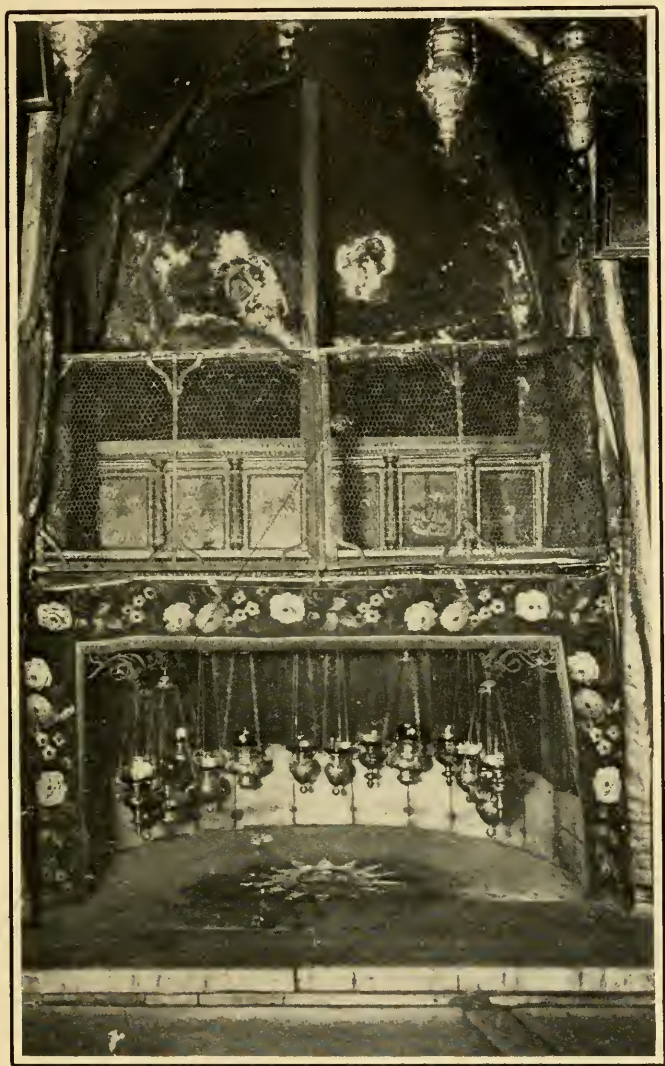
cannot greatly have changed, there is no other place presenting even an intimation of rival claims, while all tradition and the united assent of historical and archæological experts agree in pointing it out as in all probability the true location of the spot where Joseph and Mary made their lodging on that night when the angels sang. Concerning few, if any other, sites does Christian tradition extend so far back; certainly to the second century. It rests on the authority of Justin Martyr, who described the place as a cave near Bethlehem. Origen, early in the third century, affirms the fact and place to have been a matter of notoriety even among the heathen. Constantine, as we have seen, with the same confidence, ordered the erection of the Church of the Nativity here early in the fourth century. Jerome, born 340, avouched his belief in the genuineness of the site by making his abode in a grotto close beside it, where he lived and labored on his great work of translating the Scriptures—the able translation now known as the Vulgate—and where he died September 20th, 420. Besides, during all these years men, rich and poor, learned and unlearned, in rags and in armor, have been traversing land and seas, coming from many continents, to worship here. In such a place it means much to be able to say that the weight of historic testimony and the facts of location and topography make the genuineness of a site



probable. It means a good deal also to have the æsthetic feeling satisfied that the site meets all the essential conditions. This, we are glad to say, is true regarding Bethlehem and the grotto of the Nativity. It is impossible to behold such a spot, that during eighteen hundred years has been sacred to millions of pilgrims and devotees, and toward which such unnumbered multitudes of people have looked and now look with the deepest emotions of reverence and gratitude, and not be greatly moved. If a man be a Christian, and if he have in his soul even a little of that sentiment which makes the poet, the singer or the seer, it is certain that he cannot stand indifferent at the shrines of the Nativity, behold the endless procession of pilgrims prostrating themselves before them, kissing the very stones that mark them, and not feel subdued and reverent and deeply moved with a sense of gratitude to God for His "unspeakable Gift" of Him who came to be the Saviour of the world.

But possibly before leaving the crypt under the church we ought to give brief description of other grottoes beneath it, besides the one of the Nativity. Passing through a narrow tunnel from the grotto of the Nativity we came to a little cave or chapel said to be the scene of Joseph's vision, (Matt. 2: 13), where he was commanded by the angel to take the young child and his mother and flee into





THE GROTTA OF THE NATIVITY.



Egypt. From this chapel five steps descend to the so-called Chapel of the Innocents, where, according to a somewhat recent tradition, Herod caused a number of children to be slain who had been brought here for safety by their mothers. Turning to the left, in a narrow passageway, we came to the niche of the so-called Tomb of Eusebius, who is said to have been associated here at Bethlehem with St. Jerome, as a pupil—a tradition which has very little probability to uphold it. But a little further on, in a larger cavity in the rock, or chapel as it is entitled, is the reputed tomb of that early father of the church, St. Jerome. On the opposite side of the same crypt it is claimed that the pious Roman lady Paula, and her daughter Eustochia are buried. We are told that Paula, a wealthy and noble Roman lady of highest rank, who had become a pupil to Jerome, accompanied him from Rome on a pilgrimage to the holy places of Palestine, and when he retired to a cell here in Bethlehem, and presided over a monastery, she became his patron and the head of a nunnery and hospital near by, and spent her life in devotional practices. Through another short subterranean passageway, we soon came, a little farther to the north, to the large Chapel of St. Jerome. It is here that he is said to have dwelt and to have written his works. It was originally hewn out of the rock, but is now lined with walls and has

a little window which looks out toward the cloisters. There is a very excellent painting here, on one of the walls, representing Jerome with a Bible in his hand. The scene of one of the finest and most impressive paintings we saw in Rome, is of St. Jerome taking his last communion on his death-bed in this underground chapel. It is an altar-piece in the Vatican, by Domenichino, and is ranked next to Raphæl's great masterpiece, "The Transfiguration."

We think it very fitting that the great work which Jerome did, of translating the Bible into the Vulgate, and which thus gave the gospel to so many millions of people, should have been accomplished here at Bethlehem so near the spot where Jesus was born. May the time soon come when the Bible shall be in every hand, loved by every heart, and the saving mission which Christ came to earth to accomplish, which began here at Bethlehem, and culminated at Calvary, shall be so truly fulfilled that he shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied! Yes, and may none of us idly wait for that good time to come, but, joining hearts and hands, may we diligently, constantly, faithfully labor and hope and pray, and pray and hope and labor, doing our full part to help bring in that promised day!

As we were leaving, on the outskirts of Bethlehem, we passed through the fields of Boaz, where

Ruth gleaned after the reapers. The beautiful and touching story of womanly devotion has consecrated the fertile field and it was not difficult to restore the scene of three thousand years ago. That beautiful idyl of the book of Ruth, which forms an introduction to the history of David, has become a classic for all time, and Ruth and Naomi will live as long as the stars shine on the slopes of Bethlehem.

Over these same fields and the hills beyond David wandered when a young lad, after his father's sheep, and we passed just such a bare-footed shepherd boy standing under the shade of a tree while his sheep and goats grazed near. For the youth of Bethlehem still lead their flocks to pasture, just as the sons of Jesse did in the far distant past. This is one of the most beautiful regions in all the hill country of Judea, and the scenes with which it is associated have invested it with a halo which grows the brighter as the centuries pass. These rocks and fields and hills shall be holy ground as long as the sun shines and the rivers run into the sea.

Near the fields of Boaz is pointed out the hillside where the shepherds were watching their flocks on the memorable nativity night, when the Judean air was suddenly laden with melody such as earth never heard before, when the first song of redemption broke the midnight stillness, when these very peaks echoed the angelic shout of "Glory to God in the

highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men!" What a scene it must have been to those startled shepherds as on the memorable night they reclined upon the ground, their flocks sheltered perhaps under some olive trees, to have seen the approach of the angel from out the open door of heaven, and to have listened to the glad message: "Fear not, for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people: for unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord!"

One returns from Bethlehem with a feeling more akin to complete satisfaction than he finds anywhere else in Palestine, unless perhaps it be in Nazareth, Christ's childhood home, or from about the Lake of Galilee, so intimately associated with his earthly life and ministry. It is a place which stirs one's holiest memories. Almost every event connected with its history is remembered with happy associations. There never was a star that shone on earth with light so blessed as that which guided men to the manger. There never was a song so sweet as the angels sang that natal night. Well does a recent writer express the feelings of the devout Christian who is permitted to come under the spell of Bethlehem's sacred associations.

"Here he feels new joy in the fulfilment of the promise which the prophets longed for but their

earthly eyes saw not. Here the songs he loves take on new sweetness. And how many of them belong to Bethlehem! From Handel's triumphant chorus, 'For unto us a Child is born,' to the latest and simplest Christmas carol; and from the good old-fashioned, time-honored hymn, 'While Shepherds watched their flocks by night,' to Phillips Brooks' exquisite 'O Little town of Bethlehem,' they ring in his ears and give fit expression to his feelings. And what but poetry and music, consecrated by the love of Christian hearts, can worthily celebrate this spot? For here, perhaps, in the very Shepherds' field that is pointed out, and certainly within the range of vision as one stands there and looks about was heard the song of the angels announcing the Saviour's birth. No event in all earth's history was so fit to be introduced with song. A perfect burst of melody accompanies it in the Gospels. There is a quartette of earth and a chorus of heaven. Zacharias sings his *Benedictus*, and Simeon his *Nunc Dimittis*; Elizabeth breaks forth with her *Beatitude*, and Mary, clear as the lark, sings her *Magnificat*. When else on earth were ever heard four voices such as these, singing each its solo blending with the rest into one unapproachable anthem? And above them all bent the angels with their *Gloria*. One reads of this in other places; he hears it in his heart at Bethlehem."



## CHAPTER XXII.

### THE POOLS OF SOLOMON AND THE ROAD TO HEBRON.

**T**HOUGH WE GAVE the account of our visit to Bethlehem first, it was not until on our way back from Hebron that we visited the little city where our Lord was born. From Rachel's Tomb, about a mile north of Bethlehem, we kept the road to the right and went on straight toward Hebron.

A short distance south of Rachel's Tomb a road turns off to the right which leads to the very pretty Christian village of Bet Jala, which is thought to be the Zelzah of the Old Testament, where Samuel directed Saul after he had anointed him to be king. The words of Samuel on this occasion were: "When thou art departed from me to-day then thou shalt find two men by Rachel's sepulchre in the border of Benjamin at Zelzah; and they will say unto thee, the asses which thou wentest to seek are found; and, lo, thy father hath left the care of the asses, and sorroweth for you." This verse locates Rachel's Tomb as here described, and the location of the tomb fixes Zelzah, which is just a mile due west from the tomb, and about two miles from Bethlehem,



on the opposite slope of the valley. The name Zelzah means "noontide," and as we looked upon the village, surrounded by vineyards, olive orchards and almond trees, we recognized the fitness of the title. The village is a good sized one, the population being about four thousand, and is said to be one of the cleanest places in Palestine. This is accounted for by the fact that it is, as we have said, a Christian village. Most of the inhabitants belong to the orthodox Greek Church; but there are also about two hundred Protestants, with a very pretty little church and school, and about seven hundred Roman Catholics, with a church and two schools.

A little further on we crossed the upper end of the valley of Elah, into which valley, but a short distance down toward the west, David, when but a youth, was sent by his father to carry corn and bread to his three brothers who were in the army of Saul. It was there he witnessed the sad state of affairs as Goliath defied the armies of Israel. David knew little about using such an armor as Saul buckled upon him; but he did know how to sling stones out of a shepherd's sling. He also recognized that it was not alone the armies, but the God of the armies of Israel the Philistines were defying. Therefore, relying upon God, he went down into the valley, chose five smooth stones out of the dry bed of the brook, put them into his shepherd's bag, and

drawing near to the vaunting giant of Gath, exclaimed: "Thou comest to me with a sword and a spear, and with a shield; but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of Hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied," and in that name he brought deliverance to Israel by a well-directed stone from his sling. This scene was a number of miles down the valley, to the west.

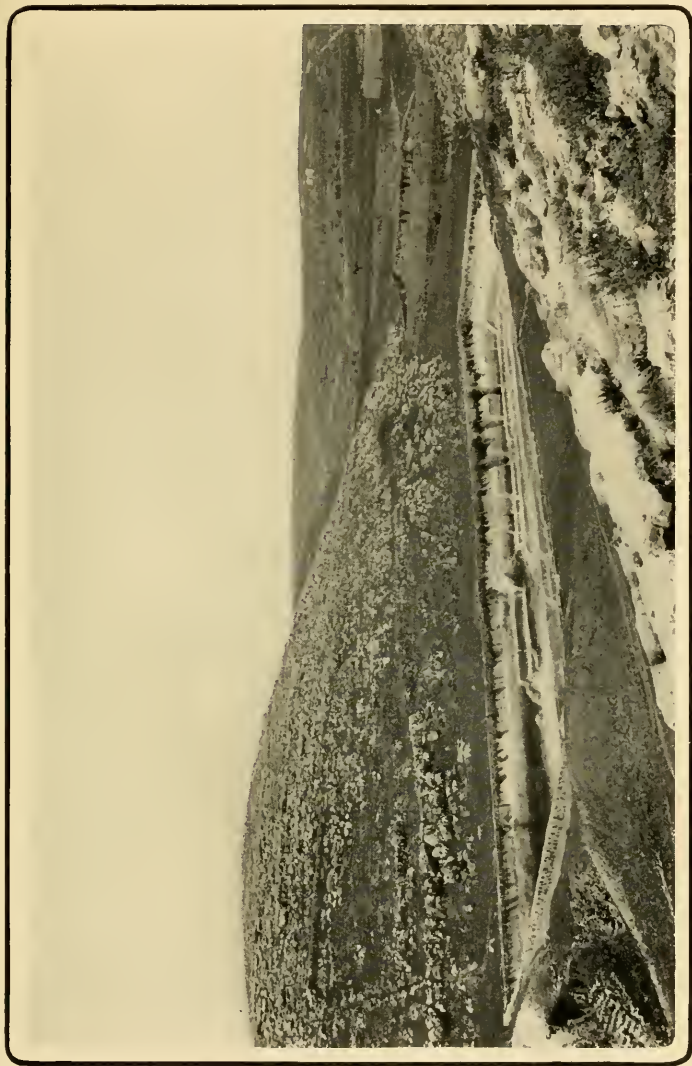
This country through which we were passing is a portion of what is known as "the hill country of Judea." The country seems poor and desolate; but it is wonderful to see how the land is fairly wrested from the wide-spread desolation. By retaining-walls and upon rude terraces the soil is held at every available spot, and much space for cultivation is thus obtained. In the valleys were many vineyards, with large bare vines, but which a month later would probably be fresh and trim. Fig trees stood gaunt and bare every here and there along the way, but just beginning to show their tender, bursting buds, making it evident that nature was waking up, even here in this elevated region. The wild-flowers had already opened their eyes. Everywhere brilliant anemones, "the lilies of the field" of the Bible, and tiny wild flowers of every hue were blooming. Indeed, the wild flowers in every part of Palestine never ceased to excite our wonder and delight, by their exquisite colors and immense variety.

An hour or more beyond Rachel's Tomb, at a distance of about ten miles from Jerusalem, a sharp turn in the road—which, however, in this hill country is a constant occurrence—brought us to the head of a narrow valley and opposite a great, square castellated structure with towers at each corner. Here, just below it, lying one above the other in the sloping valley, are the celebrated Pools of Solomon. The fortress-like building is called Kal at el-Burak, or "The Castle of the Pools." In its present form it is known to have been erected in the seventeenth century, some thinking that it was intended for a khan or a garrison; but there is little doubt that it was built simply as a means of protection for the pools from the wild Bedouins.

To the west of the castle, about three hundred and thirty feet away, on the hillside, is a small door, like the opening to a cave. Within this door a stairway leads down to a vaulted chamber in which is the so-called "Sealed Spring." The water from this spring is conducted to a fountain-tower just above the first pool, part of it, however, flowing into an old conduit which passes the pools. The spring is supposed to be identical with the "Spring shut up" or "Sealed Fountain," referred to in Solomon's Song, fourth chapter and twelfth verse. There is a second fountain a little south of the castle which also flows into the fountain-tower.

These so-called Pools of Solomon are three immense rectangular reservoirs, cut out of the rock or walled in by masses of solid masonry, lying one above another in a small valley that slopes down past the Frank Mountain and toward the Dead Sea. The valley is quite narrow and is called the Wady Urtas. The pools are among the most remarkable remains of antiquity in all of Palestine. They are remarkable alike for the labor and expense that must have been employed in their construction and for their great durability. The three pools do not lie exactly one above another, though very nearly so. From them water was carried away toward Jerusalem in two conduits, traces of which we saw every here and there along the road as we came. Many of the best authorities agree that in all probability the pools were constructed by Solomon and that they were used as the source of not a little of the water of the city of Jerusalem, and especially for the temple uses. There is a fountain in the Temple Area and cisterns beneath it which are believed to have been supplied from this source. The pools have recently been restored, so far as they needed restoration, and it is an interesting fact that once again, through recent action of the Sultan of Turkey, they are being used to supply the city of the Great King with much needed water.

Some believe that Solomon had a summer palace



THE POOLS OF SOLOMON.



and extensive gardens here where the springs are located. Josephus speaks of Solomon taking a morning ride out to his gardens, and it is thought that these are the gardens and the pools to which Solomon refers when he says in Ecclesiastes, "I made me gardens and orchards and I planted trees in them of all kind of fruits; I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees."

If the gardens were here then all traces of them have long ago disappeared, but the pools are still intact, and are of magnificent proportions. The upper one is three hundred and thirty feet long, two hundred and thirty-three feet wide and twenty-five feet deep. It is dug down into the solid rock and enclosed at the lower end by masonry heavily buttressed. A stone stairway descends into it at the southwest corner. The second or central pool, one hundred and sixty-five feet further down the valley, is four hundred and twenty-three feet long, two hundred and thirty-three feet wide and thirty-eight feet deep. It is almost entirely hewn in the solid rock and stairs descend into it at both the northwest and northeast corners. The lower pool, two hundred and seven feet below the second, is the finest of the three. It is five hundred and eighty-two feet long, one hundred and forty-eight feet wide at the upper and two hundred and seven feet



wide at the lower end, and is forty-eight feet deep. It is partly hewn in the rock and partly lined with masonry.

The aggregate surface of these three pools is about six and one-fourth acres, and their immense capacity may be realized when we know that if thrown into one they would make a body of water six and one-fourth acres in extent with an average depth of thirty-eight feet. Think of the immense labor that must have been required for their construction, as well as the skill which has enabled them to stand almost complete and entire to the present day. The glory of the olden days of Israel arose before our minds in the presence of these mighty works as nowhere else.

Our journey from here on was very picturesque winding in and out among the valleys and over the hills, past olive yards, fig orchards and growing fields of grain, and with occasionally a fountain issuing out of the hills and flowing into the valleys adding beauty and fertility to the soil. We were now manifestly in a "land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths of water that spring out of valleys and hills." To the superficial observer there may be no beauty as he looks out upon the roughness of the rock surface of these hills, especially in its present wretched desolation and neglect under a government that crushes all the hopes of industry;



but as we looked upon the brooks and springs of water, at the singular variety of the surface of the land, at olive groves and vineyards, at glens and hills and fertile flowery plains, and many other pleasing features, we could not fail to perceive how, in its palmy days, when these heights were crowned with foliage, the hillside with flocks and the fields with grain, Palestine must have been indeed a "goodly land," "flowing with milk and honey."

About five miles north of Hebron we passed, on our right, the ruins of ancient Beth-zur, called by the natives Biet Sur, one of the fortified places which Rehoboam strengthened in order to defend the approach to Jerusalem in this direction. (2 Chron. 11:7). Near by is the famous spring called Ain ed-Dirweh, the enclosure of which is built of fine regular blocks of stone. Above it are a Mohammedan house and praying place. In ancient times it was believed that Philip baptized the eunuch of Ethiopia here, though the scene of the baptism is now placed at Ain el-Haniyeh, or Philip's Well, on another road, about five miles west of Bethlehem.

A short distance further we passed, on our left, the good-sized Mohammedan village of Halhul. This place is referred to in Joshua 15:58. A mosque just outside the town is built, according to Mohammedan tradition, over the grave of the prophet Jonah. Several other spots in Palestine,

however, claim the distinction of being the burial place of Jonah. Some of the later Jewish writers mention a tradition that the prophet Gad, of David's time also was buried here. (2 Sam. 24:11.)

A little further on about two miles from Hebron, we passed, to the left of the road, a large building called Haram Ramet el Khalil, or the Shrine of Abraham. The south and west walls only are preserved, the south one being two hundred and thirteen feet long and the west one one hundred and sixty feet, and only a few courses of the stones are visible. Some of the blocks are immense, being from ten to sixteen feet long, and so finely jointed that no mortar was needed. In the northwest angle of the interior there is a cistern. What purpose the building served or whether it was ever completed no one seems able to tell. There is a Jewish tradition that the Grove of Mamre, where Abraham met the angels, is here. About two hundred feet to the east are the ruins of a large church, probably erected by Constantine. Near it are two oil-presses in the rock, and a little further south is shown a shallow cistern which the natives call the Bath of Sarah. Of course, as we near Hebron, we are getting quite into the family life of Abraham and his household!

A few minutes further, to our right, we passed the ruins of a village called Khirbet en-Nasara, or The Ruin of the Christians. Here we were at the head of the valley of Eshcol and could look down

the whole length of it. Now, as in the time when the Hebrew spies were sent over here, into the Promised Land, and cut a great bunch of grapes as a sample of the fertility of the land, this valley is famous for its vineyards and the abundance of its grapes of great size. We found the whole valley almost given up to the cultivation of the fruit of the vine, and its vineyards were a remarkable sight. The vines are evidently very old, many of them being from four to six inches in diameter. They have a way of cutting them back so that the stocks look like the trunks of small trees. Others are trained up to stakes or on dwarf trees that are permitted to grow in the vineyards. One of the branches of these vines with a large cluster of grapes, would now require, we believe, as in the days of the spies, two men to carry the distance those men had to go, away over to the wilderness of Paran.

A mile or more down the valley, the plain, or more properly speaking, the valley of Mamre comes in toward the west and forms a junction with the valley of Eshcol. Near this junction, a short half mile further down the united valleys, we came to the city for which we had set out—one of the oldest cities in all the world—called by the natives El Khalil, or The Friend, in memory of Abraham as the friend of God; but more generally known as Hebron.

It was nearly one o'clock when we reached our stopping place, and as the morning had been wet and cold we had become quite chilled by the long ride. In an upper room over the gateway we found a brazier of charcoal fire, and we felt quite oriental as we sat on a divan and warmed ourselves. We doubt not that this charcoal fire in the brazier, as we saw it and warmed ourselves at it, was just such a fire as Peter stood by and warmed himself at in the palace of Caiaphas on that memorable night when he denied his Lord and which afterwards cost him such bitter tears. Indeed, so unchangeable are the manners and customs in Palestine that there was scarcely anything our eyes looked upon that did not remind us of Bible times and Bible scenes; and herein was one of the great benefits of our journey, in making Bible times and scenes and stories and descriptions natural and real to us.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

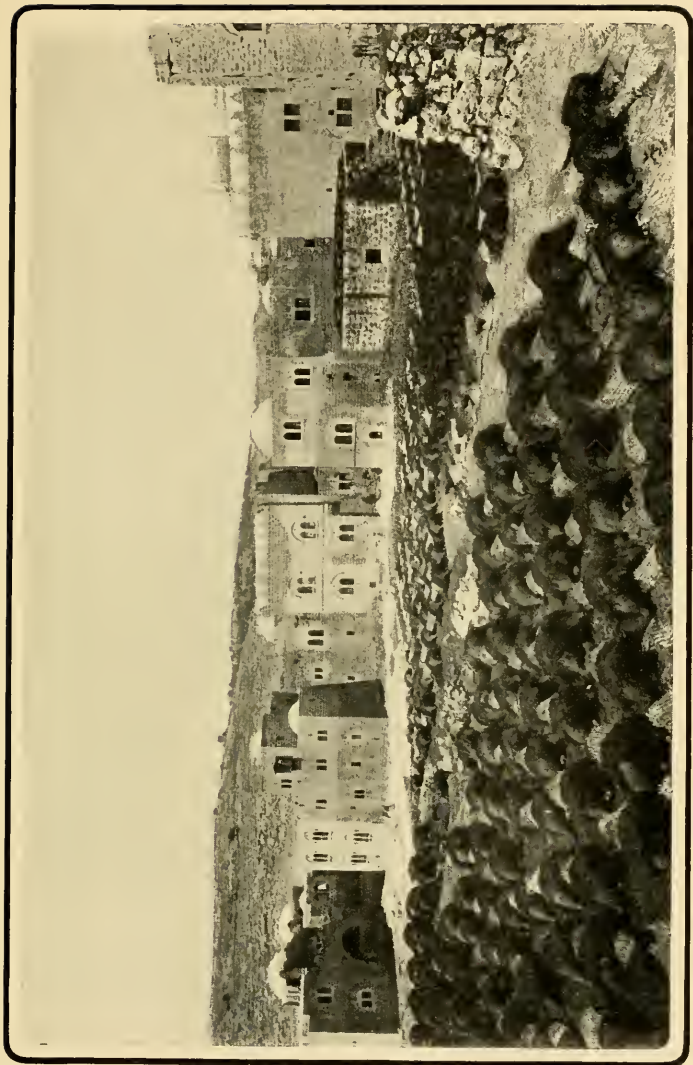
### HEBRON AND ABRAHAM'S OAK.

**H**EBRON, AS WE have said, is one of the oldest cities in the world. The author of the book of Numbers (13:22) conveyed to the people of his own generation some idea of its antiquity then by saying that it was built seven years before Zoan (Tanis) in Egypt. It is a Mediæval tradition that Adam was created here, and also that it was here he died and is buried.

The present town contains a population of about eighteen thousand, about one thousand five hundred of whom are Jews and the balance of the most bigoted sort of bigoted Mohammedans. They are notorious for their fierce and unreasoning fanaticism, all travellers needing to be very careful about coming into collision with them. Though we offered them nothing but kindness, our party was spit upon and stones were thrown at us before we left the region.

Hebron is the seat of a Turkish governorship and there is a Turkish postoffice here. The merchants of Hebron carry on a brisk trade with the Bedouins

from regions further east. We went through some of their shops and stores and manufactories. The chief branches of industry are the manufacture of water-skins, from goats' hides, and glass-making. We were told that there were glass manufactories here as early as in the middle ages. The principal articles made are lamps and more especially the colored glass rings used by the women of the East as ornaments. We visited one of the factories and found it very interesting. In a rickety old room there were three or four small furnaces of earth, all aglow with the melted material. The workmen were then making rings and bracelets and other glass ornaments to send to the Jerusalem market. The process is extremely simple. An iron rod is thrust into the melted mass in one of the pots. To the end of this a small portion of the material adheres as the rod is drawn out. This is then rapidly twisted and pressed into circular shape merely by the dexterous use of a long tool like a knife-blade. A second time it is thrust into the furnace, and when sufficiently softened is stretched to the desired size by the use of another tool. The various colors seen in the bracelets, rings, seals, beads, and other trinkets, are not laid on afterwards, as some think, but are blended with the general mass in the furnace. Many of the things are really beautifully made and the colors in them are of almost every variety and shade.



TANNING GOAT-SKIN BOTTLES, HEBRON.





The present city is divided into seven quarters; one being named from the mosque which stands in it, and the others mostly from the business which is carried on in them, as "the quarter of the water-skin makers," "the quarter of the glass-blowers," "the quarter of the cotton-workers," etc. The houses are generally of stone and many have arched ceilings and domes, as is so frequently the case in Jerusalem, the reason being that timber is too scarce and dear to admit of flat roofs. Probably the same construction was found in the days of Solomon, for we are told that he had to bring the beams and other timbers for the temple from Lebanon. Much of what is now used in these cities must be brought in the same way, by sea to Joppa, and then carried to the places where needed on camels' backs. Hence the rooms are nearly all vaulted, even when there is a second story. The roofs, however, are often made flat by raising the outside walls and filling in until level with the top of the arch. This is done on many large buildings, by means of which a fine promenade is secured on their roofs.

The most interesting as well as the most conspicuous object in Hebron is the Haram, or Great Mosque, which without doubt covers the site of the Cave of Machpelah. It is a massive structure two hundred feet long, one hundred and fifteen wide and its enclosing windowless walls are about fifty

feet high, relieved somewhat by shallow pilasters without capitals. Two modern minarets and a Saracenic addition to the height of the walls do not essentially injure the solemn and striking character of the structure. Its smoothly hewn, almost polished, massive stones,—some of them from sixteen to thirty-eight feet long and from three to five feet high,—with the distinctive marginal drafting, or so-called “Jewish bevel,” matched by no others in Palestine except in the sub-structure of the temple area in Jerusalem, mark it as being very ancient, possibly of a period as early as the time of Solomon. Christians are not allowed to pass inside the Haram. At one of the two entrances, the one on the east side, the so-called “unbelievers,” non-Mohammedans, are permitted to ascend to the seventh step of the stairway. Beside the fifth step there is a large stone with a hole in it, which the Jews believe extends down to the tomb of Abraham. Into this hole we were each permitted to thrust our arms and feel of the rock inside. That was as near as we heretics were permitted to get and as much as we were permitted to see of the Cave of Machpelah! On Fridays the Jews lament here, just as they do at the wailing place in Jerusalem. Only a very few Europeans have ever been inside the mosque, and then only by a special firman of the Sultan. One Spaniard, many years ago, succeeded in passing

himself off as a Mohammedan, and thereby gained admission. It is said that the Crown-prince of Prussia was admitted in 1869. The last Christian visitor was the Prince of Wales, the present king of Great Britain, in 1881. Beneath the mosque, in the Cave of Machpelah, are supposed to rest the bodies of Abraham and his beloved and beautiful Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, and Jacob and Leah; according to a Moslem tradition Joseph also is buried here, they claiming that he was disinterred after being buried at Shechem, and removed to this place. There are cenotaphs or imitation tombs, above the ground, to all these persons. These cenotaphs are said to mark a spot exactly over where the bodies are lying in the cave below. These are the objects the distinguished visitors were permitted to see, covered with rich carpets of green and red silk and magnificent embroidery in gold; but they were not permitted to descend into the cavern below, which is the real resting-place of the dead. The cavern is said to be double, each half having a separate opening. There is an opening in the floor of the mosque which affords a view of a subterranean chamber, which it is believed forms a kind of ante-chamber to the real Cave of Machpelah. This much is certain, that for forty centuries this spot has been revered as the hallowed resting-place of the households of Abraham and Isaac and also of the em-

balmed body of Jacob which was brought hither from the land of Egypt; also that at no known period has it ever been in the hands of any people who would have been likely to disturb or desecrate these graves. "The site of this cave," says Major Conder, "may almost rank with that of Jacob's Well and the Jerusalem Temple as being preserved by local tradition dating back to the times of the Jewish kingdom at least."

The Old Testament allusions to Hebron are very numerous. It was the third halting place of Abraham on his journey southward when he first entered the Promised Land, and afterward became a favorite camping place. It was here that Isaac and Jacob abode for a time, and it was "out of the vale of Hebron" that Joseph was sent to deliver a message to his brethren, which expedition resulted in his being sold into Egypt. Hebron was one of the six cities of Refuge. In earlier times it belonged to the Hittites, and a little later became a stronghold of the Anakim. After the conquest it was assigned to Caleb for an inheritance, because of his faith in God and favorable report when he returned with the spies. David spent a long while in the region of Hebron, and after Saul's death ruled over Judah here for seven and one-half years, or until he was made king of all Israel and removed his throne to Jerusalem. It was at the gates of Hebron that

Abner was slain by Joab, and it was here, at the great pool, that David caused Rechab and Baanah, the murderers of Ishbosheth, the son of Saul, to be hanged for their crime. It was at Hebron also that Absalom made his headquarters when he set up his revolt against his father's throne.

Our walk through the streets of the present city was anything but delightful. We thought the streets of Jerusalem narrow, but these were still narrower, and, in many places completely roofed over by archways, shutting out both the light of day and an equally important necessity, pure air; and as for the smells, they were almost overpowering. The city has no sewers, the centre of the streets being the sewers, and the sides of them a free dump for all classes. The only wonder is that some pestilence has not swept the whole populace off the earth long ere this.

Next to the Great Mosque over the cave of Machpelah we suppose we should have mentioned the two pools of Hebron. They are of great antiquity, and are usually ranked first after the mosque in interest. The larger one is in the lower part of the town. It is one hundred and forty-two feet square and about twenty feet deep, with a flight of stone steps descending into it in one corner. The wall is of very ancient masonry and is built about three feet above the level of the street. This pool

is the main source of water supply to the city for all purposes. When we were there the water did not seem to be more than five or six feet deep in it, and though almost covered with a dark green scum it was pronounced good. We saw boys and men wading in it at one corner where the water was shallow, while at the opposite corner men and women were drawing the water, filling their skin-bottles with it and carrying it away for household uses.

The other pool is toward the northwestern end of the town, and is much smaller, though it is constructed in the same manner and bears the same marks of antiquity. It is seventy-four feet long, fifty-four feet wide and twenty-one feet deep. Both of the pools appear to be supplied by rain water from the bed of the valley along which a stream of water flows in the short winter, or wet season.

The one object outside of Hebron visited by all travellers is the so-called Abraham's Oak, or the oak of Mamre. It is found up the valley of Mamre in the midst of the vineyards about one and one-half miles to the northwest of the city, and is reputed to be the oak under which Abraham pitched his tent after his separation from Lot, and where the angels visited him "as he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day," and where they were entertained a little later by himself and his wife and his servants, (Gen. 18). The tree is certainly a very venerable one



ABRAHAM'S OAK NEAR HEBRON.







indeed, and one of the largest in the country. Its trunk is thirty-two feet in circumference at a distance of six feet from the ground, and at a height of nine feet it divides into four large branches. It stands in a leaning position and nearly half of the trunk is dead and beginning to decay. For the purpose of prolonging the life of the tree a bank of fresh earth several feet deep has recently been thrown up about it and is supported by a stone wall. There is now a high iron fence about the tree and no one can get near it unless admitted—for a fee—by a monk with the key, from the Russian hospice near by. The tree and twenty acres of ground around it now belong to the Russian government, by whom a large two-story stone building, the hospice mentioned, has been erected on the hillside above, intended as a free lodging-place for pilgrims of the Greek Church who visit Hebron.

As we have said, it is certainly a very old tree. It is known to have been standing in the sixteenth century. But of course no one believes that it is the identical tree under which Abraham entertained his visitors, nearly four thousand years ago. Still, it is a tree of the same kind under which the patriarch sat, and it stands near the same spot, perhaps on precisely the same little plain; and the sight of it certainly helped us to reconstruct in imagination and to enjoy with deeper interest than ever before the scene which it commemorates.

As we have said before, we think there is no little value in coming under the influence of such scenes and associations. The land is an excellent commentary on the Book; the land awakens new interest in the Book, and we certainly know that our sight of many of the sacred locations of the land have rendered the recitals of the Book much more vivid, meaningful and real.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### FROM JERUSALEM TO RAMLEH.

**I**T IS FIFTY-FOUR miles from Jerusalem to Joppa by the railway. It is forty-one miles, or thirteen miles shorter, by the carriage road, and there is a fairly good carriage road all the way. It may sound strange and out of place to hear a modern railway conductor shout, "All aboard for Jerusalem," or as we heard the call, "All aboard for Joppa," but that is a sound you can hear almost any day of the year at either Joppa or Jerusalem.

It was at about nine o'clock in the morning that we took carriages in front of our hotel, rode down David street to the Joppa Gate, through the gate, down the hill past the lower end of the Sultan's Pool, into the valley of Hinnom, and there, within sight of the city, entered a modern railway train drawn by an American locomotive, and soon bade farewell to Jerusalem.

As our train sped away toward the south we were passing along the level plateau of El-Bukeia, known in Bible times as the Valley of Rephaim, through which the boundary between Judah and Benjamin

ran. Within three miles we passed the village of Bet Safafa, on our left, with the famous monastery of Mar Elyas, or Saint Elijah. This monument is said to mark the spot where stood the juniper tree under which Elijah threw himself, discouraged and exhausted, when he was fleeing from Jezebel, and where he slept and was refreshed by an angel who fed him. On our right were the villages of El-Maliha and Katamon, the latter being a Greek settlement of some importance, as it contains a small church and the summer residence of the Greek Patriarch of Jerusalem. The village, as we mentioned in a former chapter, is said to mark the location of the house of the godly Simeon, who in the temple took the infant Saviour in his arms and blessed him and then pronounced the *Nunc Dimittis*. A little further on we sped swiftly by the villages of Ain Yalo and Esh-Sherafat, on our left, and also very soon past the famous Ain el-Haniyeh, better known as Philip's Well. Since in the fifteenth century the tradition has been that Ain el-Haniyeh is the spring in which Philip baptized the Ethiopian eunuch, though earlier tradition has it that he was baptized at another spring not far from Hebron.

A mile or more before reaching Philip's Well the plain had begun to dip toward the west and our way was down a steep grade between narrowing hills in the Wady el-Ward, or as the name so expressively

means, the Valley of Roses. Through this valley runs alongside the railway the old caravan road to Gaza.

Our first stop was at a station near the important village of Bittir. The name of the station is also called Bittir, though it serves for two villages, Bittir, on the hill to the left, and El-Welejeh on the right. Bittir, which was known in Joshua's time as Baither, also as Bethar, lies high up on a hill and was in Roman times a strongly fortified place, and very difficult to take. We are told that once in a time of insurrection the Romans besieged it and only succeeded in capturing it after a siege of over three years. When it was at last taken there was an awful massacre of the Jewish inhabitants, the Talmud stating that the blood of those who were slain reached to the nostrils of the horses and flowed down to the sea. Of course this must have been an exaggeration. There are traces of an old fortification to be seen there still, and some remarkable chambers in the rocks and some old cisterns.

The railway here takes a sharp turn toward the north and northwest and follows down the windings of the Wady es-Sarar, crossing it twice by two high bridges over fifty feet long. This Wady or valley, is known in the Old Testament, as the valley of Sorek, and in this vicinity the story of Samson is localized. It was the home of Samson and the

scene of many of his exploits. After passing Akur, on the hill to the right, and Der esh-Shekh, on the left, one a small village and the other the location of a noted convent, we soon came in sight, high up on the rocks to the right, of the mouth of a grotto, the so-called Samson's Cavern. It was somewhere hereabout in the valley through which we were passing lived his betrayer Delilah. We are told plainly, in the sixteenth chapter of Judges, that "he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah. And the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and said unto her, Entice, and see wherein his great strength lieth, and by what means we may prevail against him, that we may bind him to afflict him: and we will give thee every one of us eleven hundred pieces of silver." Delilah did as they desired, by and by got his secret, and they overcame Samson, put out both his eyes and carried him away to Gaza, and there he was put to grinding, as a horse at a mill, in their prison house. By and by his hair grew and in answer to prayer God gave him his old time strength, and while the Philistines thought to have him make sport for them in the temple of their god Dagon, "Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, . . . and he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein. . . . So the dead which he



THE TOWER OF RAMLEH.





slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life.”

A little further down the valley of Sorek we passed, high up on the left, the village of Der Aban, then Artuf on the right, and then, on the same side, conspicuous on a conical hill the little town of Sara, which is the ancient Zoreah (Joshua 15:33), or Zorah (Judges 13:2). The station of Der Aban, which was our second stop, is over two miles distant from each of these three last mentioned villages and is used by them all, so far as the inhabitants use the railway at all, which we judge is not very much. We believe that the natives as a rule prefer their donkeys and camels; besides they seldom see money enough to pay railway fare.

The next place lying near the railway, on the left, was the Well of Ain Shems, the ruins of the ancient Beth-Shemesh. They lie on a knoll on the southern slope of the hill, just opposite to Zorah, which is about two miles away, and is, as the reader will recall, the birthplace of Samson. It was along this very part of the valley that the two milch kine took their voluntary course when the Philistines having had the sacred ark of the covenant, which they had captured in battle, among them for seven months, and finding it a curse upon them, sent it back to Israel. The ark had been at Ashdod, where the image of Dagon, in the house of Dagon, fell down

before it, breaking off its head and hands until "only the stump of Dagon was left to him." Then, in fear, they carried the ark to Gath, whereupon the city was struck with a blight of disease. Then it was taken to Ekron, and the people of Ekron planned to send it back to Israel. They made a new cart and put the ark thereon, took two milch kine that had never borne the yoke and attached them to it, and then set them free. The account then is that "the kine took the straight way to the way of Beth-Shemesh, and went along the highway, lowing as they went, and turned not aside to the right or to the left; and the lords of the Philistines went after them to the border of Beth-Shemesh. And they of Beth-Shemesh were reaping their wheat-harvest in the valley, and they lifted up their eyes, and saw the ark, and rejoiced to see it. And the cart came unto the field of Joshua, a Beth-Shemite, and stood there, where there was a great stone; and they clave the wood of the cart, and offered the kine a burnt offering unto the Lord." From here the ark was taken to Kirjath Jearim, where it remained for twenty years.

This return of the ark is certainly a very striking incident. It has given the theme for a very weird and wonderful conception by Paul Gustave Doré, in one of his pictures. Once seen, that picture can never be forgotten. As we looked down this widen-

ing valley from this point, and saw it filled with fields of waving grain the whole scene flashed upon us with a vividness that it had been impossible to realize before.

The next station at which we stopped was Sejed, which is situated at the lower end of the Valley of Sorek, where the valley widens out into a fertile plain. This plain is one of the Sultan's private domains, chosen by him no doubt on account of its especial fertility and productiveness.

About four or five miles further on we passed in near sight of Tell Gezer, or the hill Gezer, upon which are the extensive ruins of the ancient city of that name. In its vicinity are a number of rock tombs and rock-cut wine presses. There is also a large reservoir. This city was situated on a commanding oblong hill and was one of the royal cities of the original Canaanites, when Joshua first invaded the land. It was captured by him and assigned to the Levites of the Kohathite family, but afterwards fell back into the hands of the Philistines again. It was, at a later period, taken again from the Philistines by Pharaoh and presented by him to Solomon, his son-in-law, as his daughter's dowry. It was an important fortress in the time of the Maccabees, as also again in the time of the Crusades.

A little further on we passed through the small Arab village of Naaneh, near by which there lies, a

short distance to the left, the village of Akir—the Ekron of Old Testament times. Ekron was one of the five chief cities of the Philistines. It was on the northern frontier of Philistia, and was within the territory originally assigned to Judah. It is nine miles from the sea and five miles nearer the hills than Ramleh.

Our next stop was at Ramleh, which is the largest place between Jerusalem and Joppa. It contains about six thousand five hundred inhabitants, about two thousand of whom are Christians of the orthodox Greek faith. Ramleh is said to be the Arimathea of the New Testament, where dwelt that Joseph who, together with Nicodemus, went to Pilate after the crucifixion and begged the body of Jesus, and who after taking it down from the cross, “wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his new tomb.” But it is known that the tradition that this is the Arimathea of New Testament times is an unwarranted fabrication of later centuries, for the town is known to have been founded in the eighth century by the Omayyad Khalf Sulieman, and its name is of purely Arabic origin. Ramleh signifies “Sand.” The place soon became prosperous and is said to have been even larger than Jerusalem. In the twelfth century the city was greatly damaged by fire. It suffered a number of sieges and after the fifteenth century fell to decay. Of late years it has

been recovering its importance and is now the most prosperous of all the inland towns of the plain. Napoleon once had his headquarters here, occupying a room, which is still shown, in the Latin Monastery.

The most remarkable monument of Ramleh is the Tower, or the so-called White Mosque, which is situated a little distance outside the city to the southwest. The Tower rises from a base of ruined walls to a height of one hundred and twenty feet. It is a portion of a very large mosque built by the founder of the city, but was rebuilt by the Crusaders. With its flying buttresses and story after story of arched windows, it suggests a portion of an English or Gothic cathedral ruins. The top of the tower is reached by one hundred and ten steps and the view is said to be one of the finest in all Palestine. Toward the south is a large olive-plantation; toward the east are tombs and the town of Ramleh; farther distant toward the north and south and west stretches the beautiful plain of Sharon, and in the distant west is seen the silvery band of the Mediterranean, while to the east are the blue mountains of Judea. The view is finest by evening light, when the mountains are gilded by the setting sun, though our view at Ramleh was a morning view with the sun slanting from the other direction.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### THE PLAIN OF SHARON, LYDDA AND JOPPA.

**T**WO SHORT MILES north of Ramleh, traversed by the carriage road, and the railway passing near by, is the little town of Lydda, a very ancient city, mentioned as far back as in the First Book of Chronicles, where it is stated that it was built by Shamed, a Benjamite, its name being called Lod. It was occupied after the captivity and is mentioned in the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah. It is now a flourishing village embowered in fine orchards of olive, fig and mulberry trees. It is especially interesting as the place where Peter wrought the miracle of healing upon Eneas, who had been sick of the palsy, the fame of which no doubt spread to Joppa, and caused the friends of Dorcas to send for him; for the record is that all who dwelt in Lydda and Sharon saw Eneas after his restoration to health "and turned to the Lord."

Lydda lies in the midst of the Plain of Sharon. As we well know, in Old Testament times the excellency of Sharon was proverbial; and in all ages



THE PLAIN OF SHARON.





it has been celebrated for its beauty and fertility and rich harvest and pasturage. It is the largest and most fruitful tract of land in Palestine. The joyful flourishing of Christ's coming kingdom is compared by the prophet Isaiah to the "excellency of Carmel and Sharon." He exclaims: "It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing."

In regard to this plain we must use language which we would have considered extravagant before we saw it. It is diversified with low hills here and there and some rolling territory; but in its larger measurements it is a great plain extending from the region of Mt. Carmel on the north to the land of the Philistines, seven or eight miles south of Joppa, and from the Mediterranean to the foot-hills of the mountains which form the central ridge of Palestine. In other words it is a great undulating prairie about fifty miles long and varying from six to twelve miles in width. It is truly a rich and lovely country, and even in the hands of its present inefficient and lazy cultivators it sends a large quantity of produce to market. It is remarkably diversified, with meadows and pastureland, with grainfields and gardens, and with thickly set groves of oranges and pomegranates and palms, which cluster about the scattered villages into which the numerous streams from the mountains pour their fertilizing floods year by year. The plain has a gradual ascent

toward the hills, but you do not notice that, and if suddenly put down upon it would almost imagine yourself on one of our rich and rolling prairies of the middle west. The general prevalence of wheat-fields would help to confirm this impression. There is scarcely a limit to the grain and fruit this plain would produce if in the hands of enterprising and skillful farmers.

This plain has always been noted, and justly so, for the great beauty and variety of its wild-flowers. As some one has said, "Over its wide expanse in spring-time a million of flowers are scattered,—poppies, pimpernels, anemones, the convolvulus and the mallow, the narcissus and blue iris-roses of Sharon and Lilies of the Valley." The sweet scented narcissus is probably the "Rose of Sharon," to which Christ is likened in the Song of Solomon, though our guides always pointed to the beautifully brilliant cardinal red anemones, which abounded everywhere in Palestine, as the "Rose of Sharon." We think these more likely to have been the "lilies of the field" of which the Saviour spoke, for they are so gorgeous in coloring that truly indeed Solomon in all his glory could not have been arrayed like one of these.

We ought to have stated earlier that when we first entered the Plain of Sharon, looking toward a forlorn little village, the place was pointed out where Samson caught the three hundred foxes and sent

them with burning fire-brands into "the standing corn," or wheat fields, of the Philistines.

One of the peculiar sights of the plain, in any places where the railway ran parallel with the road, or caravan route, to Jerusalem, was the watch-towers which were seen at regular intervals. Half a century ago these were built all along the route to Jerusalem at intervals of about one mile, and in them the Turkish Government kept watchmen by day and night to guard the way to the Holy City. Most of these towers are falling into ruin. They are now without garrisons, but are very picturesque features of the landscape.

It is only seven miles from Lydda to Joppa and we were soon there. It seemed as if the whole town was at the station to meet us, and as if each individual was set on being employed as a guide to show us over the place, and was making as much noise as was in his power, in order to attract our attention. Our only answer to each persistent applicant was "imshi," which impolitely means "begone;" but was unfortunately about the extent of our negative vocabulary. We had our own well-tested guides and did not need any of them.

The town is beautifully situated upon a sloping hill rising out of the Plain of Philistia to an elevation of one hundred and fifty-three feet. The houses are principally built of stone, and the streets are

narrow, dirty and badly paved. The port is considered the oldest in the world. And when we saw our beautiful ship riding majestically at anchor outside the ledge of rocks in the harbor, a grateful kind of home feeling came into our hearts. This harbor was considered a port of importance in the time of Solomon, and here Hiram, king of Tyre, brought the cedars of Lebanon for the building of the temple. It was from here that Jonah embarked for Tarshish when fleeing from the presence of God. Since long before the Christian era it has been the principal seaport for all Palestine, and is to-day. When the Romans invaded Palestine Joppa was the first place taken by Pompey, as of the most importance before attacking Jerusalem. During the Jewish war eight thousand of its inhabitants were slaughtered by Cestius, the Roman general. In 1799 Joppa was taken by Napoleon, after an obstinate and murderous siege, after which four thousand Turkish soldiers were treacherously and inhumanly massacred by his order. The house in which Napoleon had his headquarters in Joppa is still shown. Joppa belonged to the tribe of Dan. There is no evidence that the place was ever visited by Christ; but all our readers will remember that it was here, while praying on the house-top of "Simon the tanner," that Peter had his wonderful vision which made the way plain for the evangeliza-

tion of the Gentiles. He saw a great sheet let down from heaven "wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts and creeping things and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter, kill and eat. But Peter said, No so Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed that call not thou common. This was done thrice and the vessel was received up into heaven." Immediately after this there appeared three messengers from Cornelius, at Cæsarea, a Gentile, and Peter went with them without gainsaying and preached the Gospel to Cornelius and a company gathered in his house; and while Peter yet spake "the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word," and Peter baptized them; thus it became known that the Gentiles were heirs of the promises of God as well as the Jews. That was the beginning of world-wide missions, and of a movement to save every soul in every nation under the sun.

Before Peter had been called away to Cæsarea, twenty-five miles up the coast, he had performed a notable miracle here in Joppa, for here lived Dorcas, the excellent woman who, "was full of good works and alms-deeds which she did." She fell sick and died. The friends of Dorcas, in their distress, remembered that Peter was at Lydda, near by, and that

he had healed Eneas of his infirmity, and they sent at once two messengers to ask Peter to come. When he came he went into the upper room where the body of Tabitha, or Dorcas, lay, and putting forth all that were in the room he knelt down and prayed, "Then turning him to the body he said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes; and when she saw Peter, she sat up. And he gave her his hand, and lifted her up; and when he had called the saints and widows he presented her alive. And is was known throughout all Joppa; and many believed in the Lord. And it came to pass that he tarried many days in Joppa with one Simon a tanner."

The house of Tabitha and that of Simon the tanner are both shown to the traveller, but he knows, of course, that they are not the originals, though there are some special evidences in favor of the general location of the house of Simon. Excavations in the front of the traditional house have disclosed some queer oval cisterns, that may have been used in tanning. These, with other accessories, give color to the supposition that the house shown stands on or near the original site of Simon's house.

The population of Joppa has very much increased in recent years, and is now estimated at about thirty-five thousand, about five thousand being Christians, seven thousand Jews and the balance Mohammedans. It is said that about fifteen thousand pilgrims to the

Holy Land pass every year through Joppa; so many visitors, of course, add much to the trade and prosperity of the place. But there are other sources of wealth. Joppa has no mean trade with other parts of the world, exporting annually large quantities of oranges, olives, pomegranates, figs, apricots and other choice Oriental fruits, besides maize, sesame, wine, soap, and wool. One of the places we visited was a very large soap factory, where a fine quality of soap is made from olive oil, and from which it is shipped to all parts of the world. It is said that the average yield of the orange crop alone, in the district immediately around Joppa, is over eight million oranges annually.

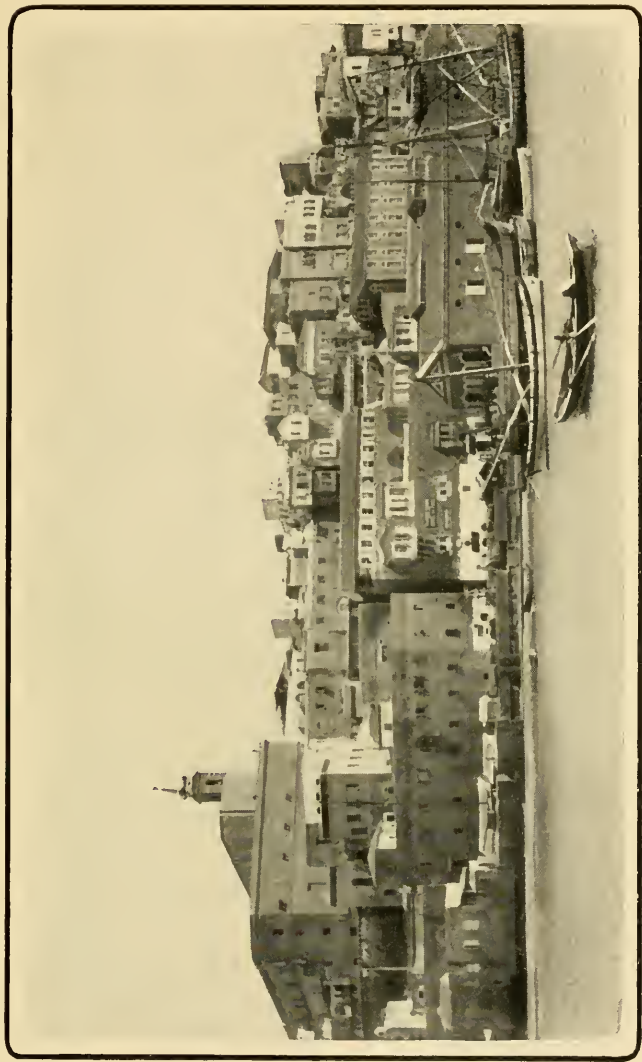
But our visit in Joppa was short, therefore we must be satisfied to give this somewhat general description. Our steamer was waiting for us outside the reefs. From Simon's house we came down streets almost like stairways to the shore. There the vigorous, well-trained boatmen, with their large, strong boats, were ready to take us to our floating home. The day was beautifully clear, the sea perfectly calm, and, contrary to all that we had heard of the difficulties and dangers of embarking or disembarking at this port, we had no more trouble than one would have on a mill pond.

The view of the town from the sea is striking and very interesting. It looked like a pyramidal mound



of houses, resembling whitish cubes or so many dry goods boxes piled up unevenly and most picturesquely against a background of blue sky. Far in the distance could be seen the mountains of Judah and Ephraim. Innumerable little boats hovered about in the bay near by. As our gangways were pulled up and our great steamer began to move off, it was with no little regret that we saw the land fade out of our vision and felt that in all probability we should not again be permitted, at least in this life, to look upon The Land Where Jesus Lived.





LANDING PLACE, JAFFA.



## CHAPTER XXVI.

### SOME SACRED LOCALITIES OUTSIDE OF PALESTINE.

#### ON THE WAY.

**T**HE MEMBERS of our cruise visited a number of places of interest to Bible students before we reached Palestine, and we doubt not our readers would be pleased to take a hasty glance at some of the locations our itinerary included before we came to the gates of the Holy Land.

We stopped first at the Madeira Islands, the land of perpetual flowers and fruits, visited Funchal, where Columbus lived for a time and got his wife, walked through its semi-tropical gardens, visited its old Citadel, the cathedrals, churches and bazaars, and found it one of the most interesting and romantic places possible to imagine. Then we went to Gibraltar, England's great crouching lion, a mighty rock seven miles in circumference, "honeycombed with galleries and bristling with cannon." Then Algiers was visited, the home of pirates, for so many years the terror of Christians, with its great Mole reaching a mile out to sea built by thirty

thousand Christian slaves, with its old Citadel or Kasbah on the heights, with its filthy but picturesque Marabout quarter and its modern and beautiful section known as Mustapha Superieur, and its strangely mingled population from every nation under the sun. We then sailed on to Malta, passing near the mouth of St. Paul's Bay with its little church and monument to St. Paul, and with every nook and cranny of the shore seeming to tell something of that wonderful shipwreck. The twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth chapters of the Book of the Acts of the Apostles became especially interesting reading to us all, with the incidents of Paul's residence of three months on the island, then known as Melita. We visited Valetta, with its wonderful harbor and fortifications, and its famous Church of St. John, so closely associated with the Knights of St. John, also took train to Citta Vecchia, and went to the Cathedral of St. Paul, built upon the traditional site of the house of Publius, who entertained St. Paul, and also to the great catacombs where the early Christians hid themselves, lived, died and were buried.

It was as we were returning to the steamer in the evening that a peculiar accident happened. It was the only unfortunate occurrence of the kind during the entire cruise, and as "all's well that ends well" we mention it only because of its thrilling interest

to hundreds who witnessed it at the time, and because of its being vividly remembered by six of our most distinguished passengers who were the principal actors in the scene. In transferring the passengers from the harbor steamers to our ship, standing outside the harbor, small boats manned by Maltese boatmen were used. The sea was running very high, with great swells along the "Celtic's" sides. As one of the small boats approached the landing-platform at the foot of the ship's outside stairway, the boatmen unfortunately allowed it to come a little too close and its bow caught upon the platform. As the boat's stern went down with the receding wave the occupants, fortunately all men, the two boatmen, several distinguished ministers of various denominations, two well known eastern business men and a big-hearted Iowa bank-president, were all unceremoniously spilled into the sea. It was indeed a thrilling moment. The hearts of the hundreds of on-lookers stood still. A sailor who was a noble swimmer leaped from the ship's deck to the rescue. But even his aid was not needed. In less time than it takes to tell it the numerous other small boats near by had picked up all the men, though the bank-president mentioned was the last to be rescued, as he had unfortunately come up under the overturned small boat. But happily all were soon on deck, and, after a change of raiment, appeared shortly at the supper

table, the only seeming difference being with improved appetites! They became the centre for congratulation of many friends, while the general gratitude for their escape took the form of a purse of gold presented to the sailor who, though unnecessarily, yet bravely leaped overboard and swam to their aid.

After our day at Malta we sailed on to Athens. Here we are standing on Mars Hill with our Bibles open at the seventeenth chapter of Acts. The hill itself is three hundred and fifty feet above the level of the sea and under the shadow of the Acropolis, which is one hundred and fifty feet higher. From where we stand nearly the whole of the modern city and practically all the ruins of the ancient city and upon the Acropolis, are in plain sight. We can see also old Phaleron in the distance, where Paul and his conductors probably landed when they came by ship from a port near Berea. We can see down across the fertile Attic plain six miles away to Piræus and New Phaleron, at the first of which our party landed and from which we came up, according to choice, in the tramcars or by carriages. Scarcely a lovelier view can be found the world over than here lies spread out before our eyes, and which lay in still greater splendor before the eyes of Paul when he stood upon this same eminence.

When Paul stepped on shore he walked through

an avenue of temples and porticos, statues and altars. When he entered the city gates he saw statues on every side in bronze and marble of the most illustrious characters the city had produced. It is said that at the date of his visit there were thirty thousand gods in Athens, that "it was easier to find a god in Athens than a man," that in one street there stood before every house a statue of the god Hermes. Paul was waiting here at Athens for the coming of Silas and Timothy, Acts 17:15,16; but walking through the city and contemplating their objects of worship, Acts 17:23, he had noticed not only altars to innumerable gods, but as though the people feared some one might be left out, and his displeasure thereby invited, they had erected at least on altar "To the Unknown God," Acts 17:23, or else they had gotten some conception of the existence of the Jehovah of the Jewish world and had erected one to him, though unknown to them.

It is interesting to know that there is one such altar in existence to-day, the only one found among the relics of antiquity. It stands on the Palatine Hill in Rome, was erected by order of the ancient Roman Senate and bears the same inscription as the one Paul saw at Athens, "To the Unknown God." Being contemporary with the one the Apostle mentions it is an object which speaks in confirmation to our eyes of the statements concerning Paul's visit to Athens.

Paul's spirit was stirred within him when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry, Acts 17:16. He therefore went first into the synagogue to reason with the Jews, Acts 17:17, and then into the public square, and there discussed with some professors of philosophy his doctrines concerning "Jesus and the resurrection." They mocked, yet they wished to hear him further. So they invited him to accompany them to Mars Hill and address them in a more formal manner. It was upon this hill, in the open air, that the court of the Areopagus held its sittings from a time before all record. Paul accepted the invitation and gave a most masterly and logical discourse, only the outline of which is preserved for us, Acts 17:22-31. In barest possible outline, what Paul said to his Athenian hearers was this: I notice that as a people you are exceedingly religious. Passing through your beautiful city I have noticed many altars, and among them one to an unknown God. It is this God, of whom ye confess ignorance, I come to declare unto you. He is the true God, Creator and Ruler of all things. He does not live in temples, such as these beautiful ones I see about me, made by men, nor does he need any services at men's hands. It is he who gives to all life and breath. He determines and appoints the lot and position of each individual, and all should seek to know him, for he is not far from any one of us. It is owing



to him we live and move and have our being. Some of your own poets have said truly that we are the offspring of God. If then we are his children, we cannot believe that he is a god made by man. This God is willing to forgive your past ignorance of him and your sins, if you will turn to him from your evil ways, come to him in the person of Christ his Son, whom he raised from the dead and has exalted to be the Judge over all.

His mention of the doctrine of the resurrection broke up the meeting. Some mocked; others said they would hear him again. "Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed; among the which was Dionysus the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris, and others with them," Acts 17:34.

Paul soon departed and went to Corinth, about forty-five miles away—a city whose Acropolis can be dimly seen from the summit of the Athenian Acropolis. There he preached for two years and established a strong church. Paul's courage in addressing such an audience as he had in Athens and in such a place certainly was admirable. His faith in his message and in the Master in whose name he spoke was inspiring. And history justifies his faith. His visit to Athens seemed almost a failure; but it was not. The time came when even the Parthenon became a Christian temple. To-day as we look about us what a change! The monuments

of idolatry upon which Paul looked have disappeared. The gorgeous image of Minerva which towered aloft on the Acropolis has been broken to pieces and scattered. The temples at that time standing so magnificent and full of idols remain only in splendid ruins. Churches and chapels dedicated to Christian worship appear on every side. The cross itself has become the national emblem and we see it on the flag flying from the king's palace below us and from every public office and on the shipping, while the mighty change which has taken place in the religious ideas and civilization of Greece bear witness to the power of Paul's speech on the Hill of Mars. One must read Paul's discourse here on the spot, amid the associations which so forcibly bring the past and present into visible contrast, in order to understand and feel the full impression of what he said.

With the impression gained on Mars Hill upon us, let us now visit the other sights of Athens,—through the Beule Gate, discovered in 1852, up the steps of the wonderful ruins of the Propylaea, to the Temple of Athena Nike, or "Wingless Victory," on our right, to the Erechtheum on the left, with the famous Portico of the Caryatides. Then to the Parthenon, the most perfect piece of architecture in the world, which it would take volumes to describe. Do not fail to notice as they appear dimly upon some of the walls, pictures of the saints and of

religious scenes, remaining from the time when the Parthenon was used as a Christian temple. You must spend an hour or two in the Acropolis Museum near by, also go to the Belvedere and see one of the finest views you will ever be permitted to look upon,—looking away to Mount Pentelikon, Lykabettos and Hymettos. Below the crest of the Acropolis we visited the Odeion of Herodes Atticus, the ruins of a magnificent music hall built in memory of his wife, also the Theatre of Dionysos, commenced in 500 B. C., the cradle of dramatic art in Greece, and capable of seating thirty thousand spectators; also the hill Museion, with its monument of Philopappas, the Hill Pnyx with its Tribune of Demosthenes, the Hill of the Nymphs with its Observatory, the ruins of the Agora or market place, the finely preserved temple, the Theseum, built by Cimon in 496 B. C. as a tomb for the bones of Theseus, the triumphal Gate of Hadrian, the magnificent ruins of the temple of Jupiter Olympus, the Stoa of Hadrian, the Tower of the Winds, the Dipylon or Sacred Gate at the entrance of the ancient city and the ancient Burial Ground outside the Dipylon. Then, of course, the king's palace, the American School, the Stadium, the monument of Byron, the several fine museums in the modern city—indeed there was no end of interesting sights in Athens, the wonderful “purple-wreathed city,” the “eye of Greece, mother of arts

and eloquence." Not a few days or a few years would suffice to see them all and give them such study as they are worthy of receiving.

We have just left Athens. Our ship is now carrying us the three hundred and fifty-six miles northeast to Constantinople. We are steaming through the famous Dardanelles, a long narrow strait with old Turkish fortresses on each side; we are passing the site of ancient Troy; we are crossing the Sea of Marmora—yes, here we are at anchor in the Bosphorus before one of the externally most beautiful cities in the world, Constantinople, the capital of the Ottoman Empire. Externally it is beautiful; but internally it is dog-infested, foul-smelling, and in many parts dark and dilapidated; nevertheless in every part exceedingly interesting.

It would take many volumes to describe the present city and tell the past history of this wonderful metropolis of the East. What we saw in even the hasty visit of a few days would require more space than we can occupy in this chapter. The visit ended, up the Bosphorus to the Black Sea and return we steamed, past innumerable villages and beautiful summer residences. We visited that "Lighthouse of the East," Robert College, at Rumili Hissar, as some of us did also that almost equally important American College for Girls, at Scutari. Back past the city, down through the Sea of Mar-



NATIVES EATING DINNER.



mora, we are now on our way toward a more distinctly Bible land, Asia Minor, and the port of Smyrna, the distance of that city being about two hundred and ninety-five miles from the one we have just left.

The next morning at sunrise we were sailing into its beautiful harbor.

The Bible references to Smyrna are only two, but much may be gathered from them. In Rev. 1:11, Smyrna is mentioned as the seat of one of the seven churches in Asia to which Divine messages were sent. In Rev. 2:8-10 the message to the Smyrna church is given, and from it we learn that it was a much afflicted and persecuted church, reduced to external poverty, yet rich in faith; also that after the receipt of the letter it was yet to undergo further severe tribulation.

The city is located at the head of the Gulf of Smyrna and at the foot of Mt. Pagus, in the province of the ancient Lydia. It stands upon a plain between Mt. Pagus and the sea, part of it on the slope of the hill, and is surrounded on three sides with lofty mountains. Most of the streets are narrow and winding; however, along the sea front are several fine streets and a broad esplanade for nearly two miles, along which is a line of street cars. The place has a present population of upwards of three hundred thousand, made up of Greeks, Turks, Armenians and



Franks. It has a magnificent harbor, crowded at all times with steamers and shipping, two lines of railway which extend inland, and is the commercial centre of the Levant. Its bazaars are exceedingly interesting; it is the headquarters of the drug trade of the world, and among its other articles of export are carpets, figs, cotton, raisins, dried currants and the so-called "Sweets of Paradise," or fig paste. The city lays claim to being the birthplace of Homer, and the grotto is pointed out where he is said to have composed his poems.

But Smyrna is sacred to the eyes of the Christian world because it was the seat, as we have said, of one of the seven Apocalyptic churches of Asia. It was sacred to the eyes of the writer also because his father, the son of a missionary, lived here until he was twelve years of age, though he was born at Malta, where the mission press was located at that time. The great and good Polycarp was Smyrna's first bishop, who, according to his pupil Irenæus, was himself a pupil of the apostles, more especially of John, and had conversed with many who had seen the Lord in the flesh. According to Tertullian and Jerome he was consecrated bishop of Smyrna by John. If this is true, he was the "angel of the church in Smyrna" to whom the message of Rev. 2:8-11 was sent. "I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty (but thou art rich)," etc. What



a comfort it must have been to that afflicted and persecuted church to be assured that Christ knew all about their sufferings for his sake. Nobly this church stood the hot persecution through which it was called to pass, as illustrated in the life and death of Polycarp, whose tomb many of us visited on the mountain side back of the city and near to a tall cypress tree. The location of the church also was pointed out to us upon the acropolis back of the city, and within the walls of the citadel. It was during the persecutions of the Christians under Marcus Aurelius that Polycarp suffered martyrdom, in the year 169. He suffered with the most heroic fortitude. When brought out into the stadium—the remains of which we saw not far from his grave—in the presence of the assembled thousands, the proconsul, struck with his holy and reverend appearance, and anxious to save his life, said to him: “Have pity on thine own great age. Swear, and I will release thee; reproach Christ. To which Polycarp made the historic reply, one of the grandest on record: “Eighty and six years have I served him, and he hath never wronged me; how then can I blaspheme my Lord who hath saved me?” and from amid the flame his spirit went up to wear the martyr’s crown.

There is much more we would like to say of Smyrna, but this chapter must include Ephesus also.

We hasten to the station of the Aidin Railway and take train for Ayasalook, fifty-four miles away, which is the station and village near by the ruins of Ephesus. As we move out of the city of Smyrna the air is full of the odor of orange blossoms, we cross the Meles and speed through a fertile valley smiling with grain fields, green meadows, and groves of oranges, mulberry and figs. Soon we come out into a broad plain with vast vineyards stretching away on either side, and the Greek peasantry, men, women and children, in quaint Oriental costumes, dressing the vines, all the while snow-capped Mt. Olympus in plain sight. These are the vineyards from which we receive the celebrated Smyrna raisins. Farther on the soil is much poorer and is devoted to pasture lands, with herds and flocks. Every few miles caravans are passed, the long strings of camels attended by Arabs in fanciful dress, presenting a picturesque scene upon which the eye rests with pleasure. But the slow and primitive locomotion of the camel train is in striking contrast with the one in which we ride, typical of the unbridled haste of our advanced civilization.

Here we are at Ayasalook! Can it be possible that this miserable village and the few scattered ruins in sight are all that remains to represent Ephesus, the city of ancient splendor! Well, there is enough remaining that it would take many days to examine

all with care. Though the ruins are comparatively meagre, yet those who have studied them carefully point out here the site of the Church of St. John, of the Stadium and the Agora, or Market-Place, of the Gymnasium and the Custom House, of the Quay and Canal and City Port, of the Temple of Diana and the Great Theatre, and many of the principal streets, while others not so reliable tell one of traditional places such as the Gate of Persecution and St. Paul's Prison and the tombs of the Virgin Mary and St. John and St. Luke. But certain it is there is little left, however interesting that little is, of what was once the most splendid city of Asia Minor, the metropolis of the region, the "Ornament of Asia," as Pliny styled it.

There is no place outside of Palestine that will more amply repay a careful study of the Biblical history connected with it than will Ephesus. Yet, for lack of space, we must be satisfied to give only a few references and suggestions, leaving each reader to follow them out more fully for himself. The city early became one of the most conspicuous scenes of apostolic labors. Paul was the founder of the church there, visiting the city first on his way from Corinth, in company with Aquila and Priscilla, Acts 18:18. His course was through the Grecian Archipelago, past many an isle of historic and legendary interest. Arriving there he went into the synagogue and

preached. They pressed him to remain, but, promising to soon return, he re-embarked leaving Aquila and Priscilla, but hastening himself on to Jerusalem, Acts 18:18-21. That was in the spring of probably the year 55; in the fall of the same year, in fulfillment of his promise, he returned, coming by way of Antioch. This time he stayed nearly three years and firmly established the great Ephesian church, afterwards addressed in the Apocalypse, Rev. 2:1-7. During his absence the eloquent Apollos, of Alexandria, had come, Acts 18:24. Instructed in "the way of God more perfectly" by Aquila and Priscilla, Acts 18:26, he had been preaching with power. Paul's labors here were abundantly blessed and a wide door was opened into Asia, 1 Cor. 16:9. We have the name of his first convert, Epānetus, Rom. 16:5. That the congregation was fully organized at an early date is evident from the account of its officers bidding Paul farewell at Miletus, Acts 20:17-38, also from the fact that it is mentioned as the first among the churches of Asia Minor, Rev. 2:1. After preaching in the synagogue he went to the school of Tyrannus, Acts 19:9. He wrought miracles, Acts 19:11-12. His preaching was so diligent that multitudes heard him publicly and from house to house, Acts 19:10, Acts 20:20. It was so effective that many brought their books of magic, to which the city was addicted, Acts 19:19, and

made a bonfire of them; and it interfered so materially with the superstitious traffic in silver shrines, Acts 19:26, as to arouse the enmity of Demetrius and the craftsmen, resulting in a riotous popular tumult, Acts 19:23-20:1. Paul himself escaped, but the church was already firmly established. Of its pastors the Apostle John was the most eminent. Here he came, it is believed, with the Virgin Mary, soon after Paul left. Here he wrote his Gospel. Here Timothy was an officer of the church and labored. It was from Ephesus St. John was banished to the Island of Patmos, and to which he returned on the ascension of Nerva to the crown, who recalled all who had been banished. John is supposed at that time to have been about ninety years of age, and is said to have died at Ephesus in the year 100, aged ninety-four. Paul addressed one of his most important epistles to the Ephesian Church, Eph. 1:1; it was in Ephesus he fought with wild beasts, 1 Cor. 15:32. It was at Ephesus that Onesiphorus ministered so kindly to Paul, 2 Tim. 1:16-18, as well as at Rome, and to this church the apostle sent Tychicus, 2 Tim. 4:12.

Of the history of the church after the death of the Apostle John little is known. But this we sorrowfully know, that the "candlestick was removed out of its place," and that all the splendor of the temple of Diana, all the pomp of her worship, and all the

glory of the Christian church there have alike faded away. But let us not think that the gospel Paul planted there failed of success, for it has spread over the whole world; nor that the letter he wrote to the people there is lost, for it is an inspiration to untold millions of Christians to-day. The success of the Gospel rested not on the history of any one church. It is alive to-day in the hearts of millions of devoted Christians, and the loving words of Paul's letter to the Ephesians are dear to more hearts to-day than ever they have been before.

We go back to Smyrna to take ship, and steam through the Greek Archipelago, past Chios and Samos, Patmos, Cos, Cnidus, Rhodes and Cypress, six hundred and fifty miles, to our first landing place in Palestine, Haifa, at the foot of Mt. Carmel.

## SUPPLEMENTAL NOTES.

### THE STORKS.

Ps. 104: 17, "As for the stork, the fir-trees are her house."  
Jer. 8:7, "Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed time; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the Lord."

One of the most familiar sights during our journey through the Holy Land was the storks. It was very common to see them, long legged and long beaked, following in the furrows behind the plowmen picking up the worms and catching the mice and reptiles. We saw them in the valley of Jezreel and other places, and especially on our way both going to and returning from Jericho, though in this latter region they had little chance to follow plowmen as little of the land is cultivated. We have read that storks are protected by law in many parts of the East, because of their value as scavengers; but one of the natives at Jericho brought one to our hotel that he had shot. We do not know if he violated any law, but we are glad to say that he got no encouragement, but reproof from all who saw the dead bird. The stork is very easily domesticated, and when tame will

follow their owners like a dog. They are of mild and peaceable disposition, and even if angered, will not attempt to strike or bite with their heavy beaks, but denote displeasure only by blowing the air sharply from their lungs and nodding their heads up and down rapidly. When disturbed with their young they make a snapping sound with their beaks. The general color of the bird is white, while the quill feathers of the wings are black; so that the effect of the spread wings is very striking, an adult bird measuring about seven feet across when flying. As the body, large though it may be, is comparatively light, when compared with the extent of the wings, the flight is both lofty and sustained, the bird flying at a great height, and, when migrating, is literally "the stork in the heavens." Like the swallow, the stork resorts year after year to the same location, and when it has fixed its nest it returns always to it, when the breeding season comes round. It is looked upon as good luck to have a stork locate about the property of any one. The stork's nest is a very large and rudely-constructed affair, seen in the tops of the trees and on very high ledges of rock.

According to many writers it is claimed that the Hebrew name for the stork signifies benevolence. This is said to be because the stork is remarkable for its filial piety; "for the storks in their turn support their parents in their old age; they allow them to



rest their necks on their bodies during migration, and, if the elders are tired, the young ones take them on their backs." According to others, the name is given to the stork because it exercises kindness toward its companions in bringing them food. Whatever may be the truth in these directions, it is a fact that the stork is a peculiarly kind and loving parent to its young. We doubt not that it is in this direction its benevolence is shown, rather than to parents or to its fellows. But the stork is a sociable bird and often many of them build their nests close together and seem to live as a sort of community.

There are valuable spiritual lessons we might learn from the kindness of the stork and, especially, from its knowledge of "its seasons" as compared with our slackness, as was the case with God's ancient people, in recognizing his judgments and his presence among us. How strangely thoughtless, wayward and foolish are the hearts of men, and how wilfully blind of God's providence and presence, and the blessings he is ready to bestow!

#### TOWERS AND WATCHMEN.

Isa. 52:8, "Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion."

To understand this joyous song of the prophet one needs to go forth to the fields of Palestine at the

time of vintage, especially in such a region as around Hebron, where the vineyards, as we saw them, are so many as in the valley of Eshcol and the valley of Mamre. The vineyards are generally on the sloping hills each side of the valley, often going up by successive terraces quite to the summit. Being far from the villages and often without fence of hedge or wall, they must be carefully guarded, and the strongest and most fearless young men are selected for watchmen. These take their stations in the watch towers or on the highest part of the mountain which they have to guard and are so arranged that the eye of one surveys the entire series of vineyards up to the point where the eye of the next one reaches. Thus eye meets eye, and every part is brought under constant watch-care. "They shall lift up the voice." When an animal or a thief appears, or any other cause of alarm occurs, the watchman who observes it makes a prolonged cry, at the top of his voice, and is immediately responded to by his fellows at the other stations. The attention of all is aroused, and it is the duty of all to see that the threatened injury is avoided, though, of course, the immediate duty rests upon the one whose part of the vineyard is in danger.

Thus it will be with Zion in the happy days foreshadowed by this prophecy. The watchmen will be in sufficient numbers. They will be rightly

located. They will be all intent in their work of watching. They will be fully ready to render each other needed information of danger or aid in resisting it. But in that day they will lift up their voice in gladness; they will sing, because of Zion's safe and happy state. God hasten the day!

#### THE SHEPHERD.

Luke 15: 3-7, "And he spake this parable unto them saying, What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance."

One of the most common of all sights as we passed through Palestine was to see the shepherds tending their flocks. It would seem as if the personal appearance of the Eastern shepherd has changed as little as his sheep and his duties toward them. He still wraps himself in his large cloak of sheep-skin, or of thick material woven of wool, goat-hair or camel-hair. This protects him from cold or rain by day, and is his blanket at night. The inner pouch in the breast is large enough to hold a new born lamb or a kid, when it has to be helped over hard places, or on account of sickness or injury has

to be taken to a place of shelter, or nursed by the family at home. "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young."

Everything in the way of devoted love, intimate knowledge and protective power is summed up in the title when Jesus is called our Shepherd. Heb. 13:20; John 10:1-18.

#### SLINGS.

Judges 20:16, "Among all this people there were seven hundred chosen men lefthanded; every one could sling stones at a hair breadth, and not miss."

The carrying of firearms is very common in Palestine. The shepherds in the fields and the travellers we passed along the way commonly had a very long, brass-bound gun, or else they carried tremendous clubs, like the weaver's beam of the giant, and, as Dr. Wm. M. Thomson says, "in handling them they are as expert as any Irishman with his shillalah, and equally as dangerous."

It must have required much practice for the seven hundred left-handed Benjamites to learn to "sling stones at a hair-breadth, and not miss." But the people of Palestine know how to make slings, and the stones for use are everywhere at hand. Dr. Thomson says: "I have seen the slings used in



SHEEP AND SHEPHERDS.



mimic warfare at Hasbeiya on Mount Hermon, and there merely waged by the boys of the town. The deep gorge of the Busis divides Hasbeiya into two parts, and, when the war-spirit was up in the community, the lads were accustomed to collect on opposite sides of this gorge, and fight desperate battles with their slings. They chased one another from cliff to cliff, as in real warfare, until one of the parties gave way, and retreated up the mountain. I have seen the air almost darkened by their whizzing pebbles, and so many serious accidents occurred that the authorities often interfered to abolish the rude sport; but whenever there is a fresh feud, or a revolt against the government amongst the old folks, the young ones return again to the fight with slings across the Busis."

#### SENTINELS.

Isa. 62:6, "I have set watchmen upon thy wall, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence."

The figure of speech used here in describing the guarding of cities got striking exemplification in our experiences during the days of camping in the Holy Land. Our camp was made up of fifty tents, and near by was also the large number of horses and pack animals. It did not occur to us that it would be done or necessary, but during the night we heard

low calls. The first call would be responded to by a guard stationed near. Then that guard would call and the next one would respond. We found that entirely around the camp was a series of guards, and that they kept up this responding to one another the whole night through. Sometimes instead of calling they would blow a small shrill whistle. After the first night we became accustomed to the sound and were seldom conscious that the guards were there. Dr. Wm. M. Thomson, in "The Land and the Book" tells us that at Sidon the custom house guards stationed around the city were formerly required to keep one another awake and alert in this same way, particularly when there was danger of smuggling.

"I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night." If we conceive of Zion, the Church of God, as a city defended by walls and towers and guarded by soldiers, how natural and striking the illustration becomes, especially to a time when there is danger of war. At such a time the watchmen are multiplied until they literally "see eye to eye," and they never remit their watchfulness, nor do they keep silence, especially at night. So does God say, in Isaiah's prophecy, that his ministers are watchmen on the walls of Zion that they are required to be faithful, holding not their peace day nor night. He then gives



a direct charge: "Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence!" To all Christians, and to ministers especially, this sentinel figure of speech, with the charge implied and given, brings an important and urgent call to duty.

#### THE JACKALS.

Ps. 63:9, 10, "But those that seek my soul, to destroy it, shall go into the lower parts of the earth. They shall fall by the sword: they shall be a portion for foxes."

As we were camping in tents every sound in the night could be plainly heard. One of the strangest and weirdest was the screeching of the jackals. When we heard them at all we seemed to hear hundreds of them, and it seemed impossible to sleep. There are a number of passages in the Old Testament in which the word fox occurs, and it is almost certain that the Hebrew word which is rendered in our translation as fox, is used loosely, and refers in some places to the jackal and in others to the fox. Even at the present time the jackal is extremely plentiful in Palestine. "It is an essentially nocturnal and gregarious animal. During the whole of the day the jackals lie concealed in their holes or hiding places, which are usually cavities in the rocks, in tombs, or among ruins. At nightfall they issue from their dens, and form themselves into packs, often consisting of several hundred individuals, and

prowl about in search of food. Carrion of various kinds forms their chief subsistence, and they perform in the country much the same task as is fulfilled by dogs in the cities. They are scavengers. If any animal should be killed, or even severely wounded, the jackals are sure to find it out and devour it before daybreak. They will scent out the track of the hunter and feed upon the offal of the beasts which he has slain. If the body of a human being were to be left on the ground the jackals would certainly leave but little traces of it; and in the olden times of warfare they must have held high revelry in the battle-field after the armies had retired." It is to this propensity of the jackal that David, a man of war, refers: "Those that seek after my soul, to destroy it, shall go into the lower part of the earth. They shall fall upon the sword; they shall be a portion for foxes." They are wild beasts, afraid of men, never attacking him however hungry, and they keep aloof from towns and cities, but live in uninhabited parts of the country.

#### THE BRAZIER OF COALS.

John 18:18, "And Peter stood with them and warmed himself."

The day on which our party went to Hebron happened to be one of the very few cold and rainy

days we experienced during our travels in the Holy Land. The distance from Jerusalem is about twenty miles and when we arrived at the city of Abraham, the friend of God, it was nearly one o'clock, and we were hungry and quite chilled through. But in an upper room, over the gateway of the place where we were entertained, we found a brazier full of coals of fire, and as we sat on a divan and warmed ourselves we felt ourselves quite Oriental. This charcoal fire in the brazier was just such as has been used by the people for centuries, in this country of almost unchanging customs. We doubt not that it was just such a fire that Peter warmed himself by in the palace of Caiaphas on that memorable night when he denied his Lord, and which, afterwards, cost him so many and such bitter tears. The fact is that almost everything one looks upon in this land is suggestive of Bible scenes and Bible times, manners and customs. This is one of the advantages of a visit to Palestine, that it makes the times of the Old and New Testaments so real to the one who goes. It is the testimony of Christian travellers generally that a stay in the Holy Land makes the Bible a new book to them.

## HOSPITALITY.

Luke 11: 5, 6, "And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him."

The East is celebrated for its laws of hospitality. Among the Bedouin and those living in remote villages of Palestine these laws retain their primitive meaning and veneration, and in the towns the parade of compliment with which a guest is received is still suggestive of the original custom. Taken in connection with the laws of neighborhood and the generally avaricious tone of Oriental life the importance assigned to hospitality is not only beautiful but mysterious.

## PROCLAIMING FROM THE HOUSE-TOPS.

Luke 12: 3, "Therefore, whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops."

As we were camped near villages, on several occasions we heard men make public cries from the housetops. These were not the Mohammedan muezzins calling to prayer, though that call too, we often heard. We were told that the custom of

making these calls is confined entirely to villages in the country districts, that it never obtains in cities. Our Lord spent most of his life in villages, and accordingly the reference is to what he heard there. At the present day local governors in villages and rural regions cause their demands thus to be published. Their proclamations are generally made in the evenings, after the people have returned from their labors in the field. The public crier ascends the highest roof at hand, and in a long-drawn call admonishes the faithful subjects of the Prophet, within the hearing of his voice, to pray to him. He then proceeds with the announcement in a set form, and demands obedience thereto.

Many sleep on the housetops during the summer, both in the city and country. The housetop is the most agreeable part of the house, especially in the morning and evening. Whenever there is any excitement the people all rush to the housetops to see and hear. We know also that the housetops were often resorted to for worship. Zeph. 1:5. In Acts 10:9 Peter was on the housetop at Joppa, in prayer, before the arrival of the men from Cæsarea.

## THE HAND-MILL.

Matt. 24:41, "Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left."

The turning of the "wheel," or hand-mill, is often referred to in the Scriptures. Ex. 11:5; Judges 16:21; Sam. 5:13. It was our privilege to happen into a home, in Turmus Aya, and see the mill in use. The mill consists of two circular stones about eighteen inches in diameter. The upper one has a hole near the edge in which a wooden handle is placed. One woman pushes the stone half way round with the handle and the other completes the circuit. A pivot rises from the centre of the lower stone and fits in a cavity in the upper, thus keeping both in place. The grain is ground between the two. It was forbidden to keep the household mill as a pledge, Deut. 24:6. It is still considered disgraceful to do so. The lower stone is harder than the upper one, the upper one being of porous lava-stone so that its surface will not become polished. The lower one is of hard lime-stone. The hardness of the lower one is referred to in Job 41:24. The cessation of the cheerful sound of the grinding of the mill the Bible makes a token of vanished pleasures. Eccl. 12:3-14.

## MONEY CHANGERS.

Matt. 21: 12, "And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money changers, and the seats of them that sold doves."

The site of the money changers is one of the most common we saw in all the bazaars and places of trade in the East. Indeed, we suffered not a little at their hands and at the hands of those who pass counterfeit and out-of-date coin.

In ancient Jerusalem the coming of worshipers from different lands, into which the Jews had been scattered, brought many different coins into circulation. Acts 2: 9, 10, 11. In the time of Christ the custom of having money changers in the temple—a custom begun for the convenience of strangers and the general public—had become a mercenary scandal. Christ expelled them on two occasions, with the others who had converted the house of prayer into a noisy Oriental bazaar.

The work of the money changers in the East is twofold, namely to change money from one kind of currency to another, and to give change in the same currency. The man charges about one per cent. But the change you get must be very carefully scrutinized both as to quality and quantity. The money changer sits all day at the street corner with

his little case in front of him, occasionally clinking his coins to make known his presence. The variety of coinage in Syria and Palestine and Egypt is exceedingly perplexing until one becomes accustomed to the different forms and values.

#### THE HYENAS.

Jer. 12: 7-9, "I have forsaken mine house, I have left mine heritage; I have given the dearly beloved of my soul into the hand of her enemies. Mine heritage is unto me as a lion in the forest; it crieth out against me; therefore have I hated it. Mine heritage is unto me as a speckled bird, the birds round about are against her; come ye, assemble all the beasts of the field, come to devour."

1 Sam. 13: 18, "And another company turned the way to Bethhoron: and another company turned to the way of the border that looketh to the valley of Zeboim toward the wilderness."

In the first passage the word rendered speckled bird is in the Septuagint rendered hyena. In the second passage the word wilderness is "the valley of the hyenas." Our dragomen were fond of telling us stories of the hyenas: After supper, in the tents, they would recite experiences with them, specially of the danger of coming under their fatal fascination at night, through the gaze of their great fiery eyes. At the present day the hyena is still plentiful in Palestine, though in the course of the last few years its numbers have been sensibly diminished. The solitary traveller, when passing by night from one town to another, often falls in with the hyena, but



need suffer no fear, as it will not attack a human being, but prefers to slink out of the way. But dead and dying and wounded animals are the objects for which it searches; and when it finds them it devours the whole of its prey. "The lion will strike down an antelope, an ox, or a goat, tear off its flesh with its long fangs, and lick the bones with its rough tongue until they are quite cleaned. The wolves and jackals will follow the lion and eat every soft portion of the dead animal, while the vultures will fight with them for the coveted morsels. But the hyena is a more accomplished scavenger than lion, wolf, jackal, or vulture; for it will eat the very bones themselves, its tremendously powerful jaws and firmly set teeth enabling it to crush even the leg bone of an ox, and its unparalleled digestive powers enabling it to assimilate the sharp, hard fragments which would kill any creature not constituted like itself."

The animal is hated largely on account of its tendency to rifle graves. The bodies of the rich are buried in rocky caves closed with heavy stones which the hyenas cannot move, or in walled-up sepulchres. But the bodies of the poor are buried in the ground. But in such case the grave must be defended by great piles of stones being heaped over them. But even when this precaution is taken the hyenas will often find a weak spot and dig out the

body and devour it. No wonder the inhabitants detest the animal.

As we have said, superstitions abound concerning the hyena. There is a prevalent idea throughout Palestine that if the hyena meets a solitary man at night it has the power to enchant him in such a manner as to make him follow it through thickets and over rocks to its den, or until he is exhausted and falls an unresisting prey. But they claim that on two persons he has no influence. Therefore a solitary traveller is gravely told to call for help the moment he sees a hyena, because the fascination of the beast will at once be neutralized by the presence of the second person. So firmly is this idea vested in their minds that they will not travel by night unless they can have at least one companion. As we said, our dragomen were full of these superstitions, and would tell with utmost earnestness stories they had heard of the fatal fascination of natives and travellers. They claimed that the hyenas would come up even to the edge of a village and allure people off to their dens. They believe that a light will break the spell, and when they go out a little way they take a torch or lantern.

## FAT-TAILED SHEEP.

Lev. 3:9, "And he shall offer of the sacrifice of the peace offering an offering made by fire unto the Lord; the fat thereof, and the whole rump, it shall he take off hard by the backbone; and the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards."

The reference here is to the severing of the tail of the fat-tailed sheep, in making ready a sacrifice. It was one of the interesting sights of our trip through the Holy Land to occasionally see a sheep of this famous variety. Frequent reference to the fat of the tail is made, in speaking of the sheep, in the Scriptures, but in terms which could not be understood did we not know that the sheep which is mentioned is the long-tailed variety. Though this particular breed is not very distinctly mentioned in the Bible, the Talmudical writers have many allusions to it. In the Mishna these broad-tailed sheep are spoken of as not being allowed to leave their folds on the Sabbath day, because by wheeling their little tail-wagons behind them they would break the Sabbath! (We did not see any so arranged.) The writers describe the tail very graphically, comparing its shape to that of a saddle, and saying that it is fat, without bones, heavy and long, and looks as if the whole body were continued beyond the hind legs, and thence hung down in place of a tail.

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